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SERMONS

ON THE

RE-UNION OF CHRISTENDOM.

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SERMONS

ON THE

RE-UNION OF CHRISTENDOM.

BY

MEMBERS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC, ORIENTAL, AND ANGLICAN COMMUNIONS.

F. G. Lee, ed.

Beati pacifici.

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BEATISSIMO, ET SANCTISSIMO IN CHRISTO PATRI

PIO,

DIVINA PROVIDENTIA,

PAPÆ NONO,

S. SEDIS APOSTOLICÆ EPISCOPO;

NECNON

BEATISSIMO ET SANCTISSIMO IN CHRISTO PATRI,

SOPHRONIO,

ARCHIEPISCOPO CONSTANTINOPOLITANO,

NOVÆ ROMÆ PATRIARCHÆ ŒCUMENICO;

SED ET

HONORATISSIMO ET REVERENDISSIMO IN CHRISTO PATRI,

CAROLO THOMÆ,

ARCHIEPISCOPO CANTUARIENSI,

TOTIUS ANGLIÆ PRIMATI,

IN SPEM UNIONIS FUTURÆ GREGIS CHRISTI,

HEU! TAM DIU IN SEIPSO PARTITI,

ET IN EXPECTATIONE UNIVERSALIS FIDEI CATHOLICÆ

PER TOTUM ORBEM DIFFUSIONIS,

QUAM CONCEDAT DOMINUS DEUS OMNIPOTENS.

AMEN.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF BELGRADE ON PRAYER FOR RE-UNION.

"We do not cease to pour forth our prayers, as by the precepts of the Orthodox Church we are bidden, for the peace, tranquillity and Re-union of all Christendom; and earnestly to implore that the GOD of all grace may vouchsafe to gather together again into One His scattered and bleeding flock, and to establish it in enduring concord."—*Letter from Michael, Archbishop of Belgrade, to the Bishop of Oxford.*

THE BISHOP OF EPHESUS ON RE-UNION OF EAST AND WEST.

"From all that we can gather regarding the venerable British Churches, as well as from the changing attitude of some amongst our brethren of the Church of Rome, it may be reasonably hoped and predicted, as well as wisely desired, that the days of estrangement between Christians of the East and West should come to a speedy end, and that the One GOD Whom they serve should be together worshipped, and the One Faith which they hold conjunctively proclaimed by all the ambassadors of the Highest, and be received with great joy and gratitude by the un-Christianized nations of the earth."—*Letter from Paisius, Bishop of Ephesus, to an English Clergyman.*

THE BISHOP OF BIRMINGHAM ON INTERCOMMUNION OF THE CHURCHES.

"Could there be anything more desirable than that the bridge should be lowered between the two great authorities which represented the religious organizations and thought in this country? After ages of dissension, the bridge, he was glad to observe, was being lowered, and people on either side were beginning to comprehend each other better."—*Speech of the Right Rev. Dr. Ullathorne, R. C. Bishop of Birmingham, at Leamington, August,* 1864.

THE BISHOP OF SALISBURY ON CORPORATE RE-UNION.

"A sentence in the Bishop of Salisbury's Charge deserves greater attention than the obscurity of a learned language is likely to win for it. After surveying the state of his diocese, and deprecating in the strongest terms any relaxation in the ecclesiastical laws of Ritual, Matrimony, Church Rates, and the like, his lordship proceeded to utter aspirations for a restoration of unity to the Churches. Gliding suddenly into Latin, and appearing to quote from some leader of the movement which began twenty years ago, his lordship brought his aspirations to a close, as nearly as could be heard, in these words, 'The Bishop of Rome (i.e. the Pope) will not yield to us, but we, together with him, will yield to GOD.' *Non ille nobis cedet, sed nos, una cum illo cedemus Deo.* This report of the quotation may not be verbally exact, but is so substantially. No part of the Bishop's Charge was delivered with such visible emotion, or in a manner so expressive of earnestness, as this remarkable sentence."—*Newspaper paragraph.*

PREFACE.

THE following Sermons have been contributed by individual members of the Association for the Promotion of the Unity of Christendom,[1] with the simple object of ventilating the important subject of Corporate Re-union, and of interesting those who for the present stand aloof from promoting the movement, in the silent work which—by GOD's blessing—is being accomplished. They are written by members of the Latin Church, of the orthodox Eastern Church, and of the Church of England. Each individual contributor is alone responsible for what he himself has written. He is in no degree answerable for what stands side

[1] One of the Extracts from a Bishop's Charge towards the end of the volume is not included in this statement.

by side with his own sermon; nor is he in any way responsible either for the facts, statements, or opinions expressed in this Preface, nor for the terms and sentiments in which the volume is dedicated. Nor is this a publication of the A. P. U. C. in the sense that the seven thousand persons who pray daily a prayer for peace and oneness are in any way committed either to the particular opinions it contains, or to the general policy or wisdom of issuing it. A majority of the contributors have preferred to remain anonymous. Others have affixed their initials to their sermons. Thus the volume, if it prove successful in the work it is intended to accomplish, will have gained that success from the intrinsic truth and power of its arguments and aspirations, rather than from any other causes.

No mere casual observer of the signs of the times can have failed to remark how continually the high and holy subject of the Visible Re-union of Christendom is now being brought prominently

forward on all sides. Some years ago only a limited number entertained the possibility of such a consummation. Now it is otherwise. Amongst each of the separated Churches,—the members of which claim for themselves the inheritance of the Priesthood and the Name of Catholic,—the movement for restored intercommunion is slowly and surely progressing. Since, in recent times, Dr. Neale first interested on the one hand, the authorities of the Greek Church in the policy and work of the Anglican Communion, and many of the English clergy and laity in the character and position of the Orthodox Eastern Church, on the other; prayers for the restoration of Visible Unity have been systematically and continually offered by members of each; while the publication and use of Cardinal Wiseman's and Mr. Keble's respective Prayers for Unity indicated a growing desire for peace between Latins and Anglicans. More recently, again, several of the clergy on all sides have addressed themselves to a

special consideration of this important subject. This is manifest in many ways; Roman Catholic Bishops in Ireland, Bishops of the Anglican Communion in the Colonies, and Prelates of the Eastern Church are reported to have brought the subject of Unity specially before their clergy in formal charges and pastorals. It is obviously unreasonable to expect the Bishops in England—whether Anglican or Roman—(though some have ventured to do so), to take any very active measures as yet. The great question, in the meantime, is more or less novel. For the present we must be satisfied if members of the second order, on both sides, and the laity ventilate the subject. Then, again, the unhappy but possibly providential position of antagonism which the two communions in England temporally occupy with regard either to other, makes any very direct labour for Re-union obviously difficult at the outset. The difficulties, differing materially of course in character, are as weighty on the one side as on

the other. Those high in position on either hand feel their responsibilities, and hesitate, as yet, openly to sanction any direct proposition for the restoration of peace. But several are known quietly to promote the great cause we have at heart, and to remember it as well in their daily prayers as at the altar of GOD. The special introduction of the subject into sermons is another marked feature in the movement; while, with regard to Corporate Re-union, the improved tone of the most influential of our Church periodicals is a palpable gain for which to be deeply thankful.

But we imagine it will not be generally disputed that the establishing seven years ago of the Association for the Promotion of the Unity of Christendom,—to which up to the present time about seven thousand people have formally joined themselves,—has done much to bring the subject of Unity before many. Several of those who stood aloof at the outset, and who might have been expected to have cordially co-

operated, have since given in their adhesion; and as regards numbers those who first set the Association on foot, cannot but be thankful that its works and aims have been so soon and so signally blessed.

The Association was originated in the year 1857. On the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, certain Roman Catholics, Greeks, and Anglicans met in the parish of S. Clement Danes, Strand, in the City of Westminster,—having that morning previously, at their respective altars, asked Almighty GOD'S blessing upon their contemplated plans,—and, after duly arranging its organization and drawing up the well-known paper of the Association, thirty-four persons formally enrolled themselves members. A dignitary of the "Scottish Episcopal Church" was in the chair. The following Resolution was moved by a distinguished Roman Catholic layman, seconded by a well-known Clergyman of the Church of England, supported by members of

the Greek Church and others, and was unanimously adopted:—

"That a Society, to be called the Association for the Promoting the Unity of Christendom, be now formed, for united prayer that Visible Unity may be restored to Christendom; and that the Paper now before this meeting be sanctioned, printed, and circulated, as the basis upon which this Society desires to act."

Since that day the Association has steadily increased, as will be seen from the following statement:—

On September 8, 1858, a year after its formation, there had enrolled themselves members	675
On Sept. 8, 1859 (in addition) . .	833
„ 1860 „ . . .	1060
„ 1861 „ . .	1007
„ 1862 „ . . .	1393
„ 1863 „ . . .	1202
„ 1864 „ . . .	929[1]
Thus making a total of . .	7099

Of these the great majority are members of the Church of England; but

[1] The record for the present year is incomplete, many of the local secretaries not having made any returns.

there are nearly a thousand belonging, to the Latin Communion, and about three hundred members of the Eastern Church. The paper of the Association has been circulated far and wide; about thirty-nine thousand copies in English having been already distributed. It has been translated into Latin, French, Greek, and Italian, and sent abroad in various ways and by different channels. Local secretaries, both at home and in foreign countries, are being increased, and many correspondents are labouring energetically, and with considerable success, in the cause. The Association has been approved in the highest ecclesiastical quarters, both amongst Latins, Anglicans, and Greeks. The Holy Father gave his blessing to the scheme when first started, and repeated that blessing with a direct and kindly commendation to one of the English secretaries, who was more recently granted the honour of a special interview. The Ex-Patriarch of Constantinople and other Eastern Prelates have approved

of the Association, and so likewise have several Bishops, both Anglican and Roman Catholic, in England, Ireland, and Scotland, as well as on the Continent and in America. And no wonder, for the work proposed is simply to pray for the restoration of visible Unity to Christendom, and to ask continually for the blessings of peace.

Should the following Sermons—of which it is hoped to publish a second series shortly—in any degree lead those into whose hands they may fall to accept and to propagate the broad and charitable principle that it is a true and proper policy either to join the Association, or to work independently for the object with which it was founded, the labour of him who planned this volume, and the generous and efficient assistance of those who have so promptly and so ably contributed to its pages, will have received a fitting, an acceptable, and an abundant reward.

F. G. L.

DONA PACEM IN DIEBUS NOSTRIS, DOMINE.

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OUR LORD'S CONTINUED PRESENCE A PLEDGE OF FUTURE UNITY.

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"BUT THE LORD IS IN HIS HOLY TEMPLE: LET ALL THE EARTH KEEP SILENCE BEFORE HIM."

To a Synod assembled at Tyre in the year of our LORD 335, the Emperor Constantine sent a letter by the hands of a messenger, who was charged, besides delivering the writing confided to him, to urge by word of mouth the Prelates to hasten to Jerusalem without delay. Eusebius thus relates the effect of the imperial message upon the assembly.[1] "Hereupon all departing from Phœnicia, hastened along the public road leading to Jerusalem; which city was crowded with renowned Bishops from all the provinces of the empire, who had there

[1] *De Vitâ Constantini*, Lib. iv. cap. 43.

assembled; for both the Macedonians had sent the Bishop of their principal See, and the Pannonians and Mœsians, the chief flowers of their newly planted garden. There was present also the chief ornament of the Persian Episcopate, a man admirably skilled in divine learning. The Bithynians and Thracians likewise graced the assemblage with their presence; nor were the most famous Bishops of Cilicia wanting. The most eloquent Bishops of Cappadocia also were conspicuous among the concourse; while all Syria and Mesopotamia, Phœnicia and Arabia including Palestine, Egypt also and Libya, with the occupants of the Thebaid—all these together, completed the reverend chorus. Attendant upon the Bishops was an innumerable multitude of men from every province, nor was the solemnity without something of regal service; for certain men of high estimation were sent from the palace, who dignified the festivity by their liberal expenditure of the imperial bounty." Such is the courtly historian's account of the multitude which flocked to the consecration of the Church round which the sympathies of the greatest number of Christian men centre and in which they converge—that sacred building which embraces within its precincts the spot where the Saviour of the world suffered death, and also

the tomb from which He rose victorious over death.

On this spot we may see, as it were in a glass, the fortunes of Christendom reflected. Here, during the long depression of the Church under the powers of the world, the greatest pains had been taken to efface those memorials, so precious in the eyes of Christians; first, by heaping upon the spot piles of earth and rubbish, and ultimately by building upon the mound a temple for the impure worship of Venus. Here then, on that central spot of Christendom, was a vivid representation of what was going on throughout the entire Christian Church. At Rome, the metropolis, the Church was worshipping underground, in the darkness of the Catacombs, whilst above, all the impurities and impieties of heathenism were celebrated in open day, and with the additional zest derived from its opposition, now open and declared, to the spreading religion of CHRIST our SAVIOUR.

The Church, however, had now at length passed that phase of its existence. The Emperor Licinius was subdued by his Christian coadjutor, A.D. 323. In three years from that time, it was revealed to the piety of S. Helena where she was to find the memorials of our Blessed LORD, which from henceforth were designed to exercise so abiding an influence over

Christendom. Having served her generation, the pious Empress was summoned to her rest; her work remained to testify to her piety, and now, seven years after her death, the spots to which she had directed the workmen having been in the meantime enclosed in a noble building—worthy of GOD, writes the historian, and of royal magnificence,—all that man could do was completed, and the imperial summons collected for its consecration the august assemblage described by Eusebius.

But even on this occasion, the component parts of that assembly of Bishops only too truly reflected the state of the Christian Church. There was one absent, who at this distance of time towers far above all those whose presence in courtly phrase the unorthodox historian records. The great Athanasius was under the ban of that very council, the members of which came to dignify the splendid ceremonial; and although we know that all who took part in the proceedings were not heretical, yet the council at which they had most of them been assisting was so. Arianism was for the time triumphant, and where, but at the sepulchre of CHRIST, should it show that it was so? Piety caused the Church to be built, but heresy must needs consecrate it, to His service Whom it denied to be truly GOD!

And yet, my brethren, consider how great a temple that was, which was dedicated in the ides of September, in the year of the Incarnation 335. If generals regard with interest the fields on which they have gained honour and renown —if the places where they have overcome the enemies of their country are ever after thought of with feelings of the deepest gratitude and the most intense emotion, shall we suppose that our Blessed LORD, Man in every other respect, is wanting in this most human feeling? Shall we think that, highly exalted though He be, He shares pure human feelings less than in the days when He sojourned on earth? Shall He be supposed to have less interest than mere men in that place where He gained His triumphant victory over His and our spiritual foe? This were to deny Him to be man in the perfection of His nature. This were to set up a private interpretation against the common opinion of esteemed expositors, that the scene of our LORD'S humiliation is to be the witness too of His exaltation, when He comes again. Shall the SON of Man less love the spot where He laid aside all the infirmities of the flesh, which for our sakes He had assumed, than does the invalid that place where he has regained his bodily strength? Every thought forbids the supposition. It was the perversion of a true

sentiment, which led the ancient heathen to feign their gods as being deeply interested in the welfare of certain places to the exclusion of others. The fact of the Incarnation has given reality to that which before was but a beautiful fiction. It was the consequence of a deep truth in our nature, that led the early Christians to mark with such peculiar reverence the places which bore the foot-prints of their ascended Lord. It was a truly human feeling in the best sense, which impelled men to seek converse with the martyrs who had laid aside the burthen of mortality on the very site of their sufferings. Through our common humanity we are linked to them and to our Blessed Lord, because we know them to share our best feelings; for the strongest bonds of sympathy and of love can only exist between those beings who share the same nature.

He then Who had winked for three hundred years at the open persecution of His religion, having now recovered for Himself this most sacred spot, which He had meanwhile guarded with such peculiar care,—inasmuch as He had made His enemies even contribute towards its preservation by the very means they adopted for its obliteration,—now resumed possession of it. He, too, Who suffered so many of heretical opinions to be represented on the day

of the consecration, yet confided to the hands of His true servant Macarius the actual dedication of that church which was to last as long as the world itself, and long after that special error which then prevailed was laid asleep. On that day, then, 13th of September, 335, He came down, in answer to the prayers addressed to Him, again to resume possession of that house which was His, and had been occupied, in token of His right, for forty hours, three hundred years before. He accepted the sacrifice of commemoration offered for the first time on the newly raised altar, and He appeared, notwithstanding the shocking divisions of the time, which may even make ours appear tolerable, as the future cementer of all schisms, in the Sacrament of Unity.

No longer now was the tomb empty. It could not be said, as on the morn of the Resurrection, "He is not here," for the whole house was filled with His glory. No longer was the Cross concealed underground, but was reared in the face of all men, to proclaim the triumph of Him Who, having vanquished death, had raised to new life the world formerly lying dead in sin. All things there were full of His Presence, and people from the furthest regions of the known world acknowledged that the Lord had taken up His abode in His holy

temple, by flocking to worship on the spot consecrated by the memorials of what had there been done for the sins of men, and to assist at the Sacraments, the evidences of His abiding Presence.

But if we cast our eyes upon what is taking place in that very Church at this day, shall we not be fain to confess that the miserable divisions which we now witness, for a time rendered less visible by the power of an absolute monarch, were really there in their germ? There was in truth no real concord amongst those who were assembled together in the same church for the same purpose. Macarius, the discoverer of the true Cross, and a distinguished member of the Synod of Nice, was indeed but ill-assorted with Ursacius and Valens, "the standard-bearers of the Arian faction," as they have been called; who, having been sent for the purpose of inquiry into Egypt, by the Council of Tyre, had returned, bringing against S. Athanasius the most violent charges which were afterwards proved to have been most untrue. Surely the altars of contending religionists, built within the sacred precincts of that Church, are but the legitimate consequence of those disagreements which were then held in some sort of control by the Imperial power alone. There was indeed in those days an appearance of unity which we

now lack. All worshipped at one altar, all partook of the same Sacraments; but surely this was not less horrible than the rival altars which now proclaim to all the world our most unchristian divisions.

It is as far as possible from my wish to reflect on any body of Christians. This is not the place for controversial topics, and, if I refer to the existing state of things, I would desire to do so without causing offence to any single Christian hearer. I merely state facts, and I do not presume, as, indeed, it would ill become me, to impute blame.

Let us then suppose it Easter as we are wont to keep it. Whilst the one part of the Holy Sepulchre is still in the funereal garb of Passion-tide, the other is blazing with the glories of the festival of the Resurrection. This would first strike the observation of a stranger, and his thoughts would naturally revert to the early ages, when the dispute about keeping Easter became the occasion of the first rupture between East and West. Certainly the diversity in the calendar must tend to keep East and West apart, albeit not the occasion of the breach which now exists; and it is earnestly to be prayed that some means may be devised for removing this, one of the most generally remarked phenomena of division.

From the Latin Easter we will take a view of that of the Greeks. Early on the morning of the Resurrection, amid heathen guards and in the presence of the Mahometan governor, fire bursts forth from that tomb from whence the Light of the world arose, after His obscuration in the grave, to shed His beams over all the earth. Far, very far different is the scene from that which was witnessed on the first Easter morning, amid the awful calm of the early dawn. Is He in the storm of contending factions, which are withheld from injuring one another only by the presence of the soldiers of the false prophet? On the morning of His Resurrection He revealed Himself first to that one loving heart, then to the two or three, then to penitent Peter. Alas, my brethren, it is difficult indeed to realize His Presence amid all the noise and contention which attends the annual miracle, against which those of the Papal obedience inveigh, whilst the rationalist from the West holds these too, equally with others, to be objects of ridicule, and scoffs accordingly at all without distinction. How true a microcosm is here presented of the present state of Christendom! Latins, Greeks, Armenians, Abyssinians, Copts, and Jacobites, mingling as for internecine conflict around those altars from whence ought to be dispensed

the sacrament of unity; and the Western rationalist looking on with scorn and contempt. What an answer is this to our Blessed LORD'S prayer that they all may be one! How can we hope to convert the world whilst this continues? How, when we have lost that mutual love which used to work miracles in other times, can we expect others to be drawn towards us? and what a place in which to display our hatred! The very spot where one should have thought that the hallowing influences of mere mental association would have suppressed every harsher temper, and knit us together, for the time at least, as having One and the same object of contemplation! And we may well ask, is GOD still in His holy temple? Can the GOD of peace dwell where strife and irreverence predominate? Does CHRIST our LORD still claim as part of His fold that inclosure wherein He laid down His life for the sheep who no longer hear the voice of the Shepherd, and will not follow where He leads them? Where the notes of strife are perpetually heard, and where at times blood is even spilt in furious contest, few indeed who are outside would recognize the spot where, in love to lost mankind, our LORD poured forth His own most precious Blood, to cement together the stones of the spiritual temple which was designed to embrace

the whole world. By a monstrous perversion of language, we use that one word which is expressive of the union of all Christians, to indicate the fact of their separation. The Latin, the Greek, the Armenian communion, proclaims to the world not unity, but diversity. And apparently we think little of the circumstance of which this abuse of language is significant. And when it does strike us, then we are apt enough to ask in half-incredulity, if the LORD were still in His holy temple, must not the whole world of necessity keep silence before Him? Would not all harsh wranglings be hushed before Him "Who stilleth the raging of the sea, and the noise of his waves, and the madness of the people?"

It is not an easy matter to give a satisfactory answer to such questionings as these which arise in the heart of him who is really deeply concerned at these dreadful anomalies. But we may suggest that He Who draws so many now separated and excommunicated men—who still bear His Name, and have at any rate received a common baptism,—round that one spot where He was lifted up, and Who has implanted such earnest longings after unity in the bosoms of those who in their acts deny what their hearts yet yearn after, will even yet gather together in one the dispersed threads of His

woven vesture. We cannot doubt that He is in His holy temple Who calls together under one roof, through the attraction of His love, so many of different nations and dissimilar belief, and has allowed each to rear an altar round the holy Cross, and close by the place where He lay for three days entombed. Does not the Angel speak intelligible language to every Christian ear, and does not each show that he regards the words, "Come, see the place where the LORD lay?" The invitation was not to the LORD's own immediate followers alone, but to all who bear His Name.

What attracts, if it be not love? Truly they give but an imperfect account who say it is the jealousy of rival sects. Why should they envy one another the possession of that spot, but that they esteem it highly? We do not envy another the possession of that which we do not ourselves value. Why should men commemorate His death perpetually, each in the form in which he has been instructed, but that "Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia and in Judea, in Libya, and in the parts of Egypt about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians," shall one day speak the same thing, as the HOLY GHOST shall give them utterance? Diversities of tongues are no longer,

as in the days of the Apostles, an evidence of the Presence of the Holy Ghost. What we now require, as the evidence of having the One Spirit, is that we all speak the same thing; and men, by flocking round that one centre in Jerusalem, as they do nowhere else in the world, proclaim that rightfully they are not of many but only of one communion, to which all must belong.

But yet again we shall be asked, "Is Christ divided?" Can that which is heretical or schismatical, and can the offerings made on the altars of such as are so, avail as much as that which is offered, not merely rightfully, but even validly, on Catholic altars alone? Can those out of the true channel receive, through their Sacraments, that which avails to individual growth in holiness, and so tends to unity? It is impossible to reply to a question so proposed: we can only suggest that that which, to the reason of men, may seem to be argumentatively unimpeachable, may not embrace the whole scope of God's Providence. It is wiser and more charitable to look for those evidences of His abiding love towards those who bear the Name of His ever adorable Son, than for arguments which may serve to justify our own want of charity.

No doubt there is a main channel of God's

grace, and no doubt, too, sin in His creatures has obscured their powers of perception on this point. No doubt, also, there is great individual loss when one is out of that direct channel, and in proportion as the person is far removed from the main stream will be the loss of the sentiment of unity. But this we cannot doubt, that those who see in the commemorative Sacrifice which they in common offer, their SAVIOUR pouring out His Blood, and presenting His Body in love to them, have therein a feeling in common; and this must, in spite of themselves, so far as it goes, produce unity of thought, and if duly attended to must ultimately bring men together. Common love must produce common offices of kindness. A Christian, whatever be his peculiar rite or sect, has claims upon us which we acknowledge, and which a heathen, a Jew, or a Mahometan can never have. What the worst heretics who retain a sacrifice offer, they offer to GOD, not to devils. The multiplication of heathen systems led of necessity to hopeless disorganization; but all separatists from the true Church, who have carried with them a Priesthood and a Sacrifice, have really in possession that which not only enkindles love, but on each repetition also increases and supports it. Their variance is in other less important points; all of which may

be, and we must pray shall be, ultimately overcome and borne down by love all-conquering, the vanquisher of every seeming impossibility. For such we may entertain the hope that, as communities, they may be all again re-united; and as to others who lack the altar and the priest, we may at any rate work for their individual conversion.

Is CHRIST, then, still in His holy temple at Jerusalem? Undoubtedly He is. He Who in watchful care preserved the true Cross under the ruins of Jerusalem,—He Who sealed up the tomb wherein He lay for three days, until, three hundred years after, by special revelation He pointed out its site to the mother of the first Christian Emperor,—He Who, meantime, tolerated upon that spot the impure worship of the heathen goddess, whose name was a by-word for heinous immorality,—He Who with such fore-knowledge guarded the spot rendered sacred in the eyes of all Christendom, and which exercises, and will continue to do so, the most extensive influence upon Christian souls, —He, be sure, has not given over the temple, which He first condescended to bless fifteen hundred years ago, to the spoiler. Never has proceeded from the high altar in that Church the Voice which did proceed from the holiest place of the Temple hard by, "Let us depart

hence." Though the powers of hell have done their worst, and intruded themselves into the Very Divine Presence, and have there successfully sown the crop that has sprung up, hatred and variance, emulation and strife, seditions and heresies, yet have they not prevailed. If they could not succeed in defiling that spot by the impure worship thereon celebrated for two hundred years, and if GOD has, throughout its history down to the present time, still preserved the precious memorials there enshrined from fire, robbery, Mahometan spoliation, and the intestine jealousy of Christians themselves, shall we deny that He still fills that Church with His Presence, and dispenses to those who seek Him in it aright the Sacraments which are to begin and continue the union between Himself and the members of His Body? It is true that here, as on the central point of the Christian world, the most virulent attacks of the enemy have been made. In less than three hundred years from its foundation, the Church was taken and destroyed by the Persians. At the end of three hundred years more it was again burnt by the followers of the false prophet. In less than a hundred years it was again destroyed; and even during the present century it has been nearly entirely consumed.[1]

[1] The dome is now said to be so unsafe, that repairs are to

So, too, was Solomon's temple; and yet the awful intimation of desertion never proceeded from the holy place, notwithstanding repeated desecrations, until the word went forth which doomed it.

It is, then, from His holy Sepulchre that our Blessed Lord exercises His most powerful influence on earth. It was to recover this spot that the Fathers of Nice earnestly entreated the Emperor Constantine. It was to visit this place that pilgrims, despite robbers, wild beasts, and the perils of the deep, wended their way from the furthest West to kneel at the foot of the Cross, and kiss the rock where the Lord had lain. To do this many braved the vengeance of the infidel, and many suffered death. It was to recover this sacred place from the followers of Mahomet that for two centuries during the middle ages the West poured out her treasures and shed her noblest blood. And as the nature of our contests is now changed, the last century saw the sincerity of the title of the Holy Sepulchre called in question, and made a principal point of cavil by infidels of another stamp from those with whom our fathers contended from the eleventh to the thirteenth

be immediately begun upon it. The governments of Russia and France are to furnish the necessary expenses. East and West in this case are working in common.

centuries. But again has the enemy been routed—let us ever be thankful for it—by a Priest of the English Church, who has also brought before us a scheme which, more than any other, seems likely to be productive of extensive good, in making the East and West better acquainted.[1]

But if, despite these unseemly separations, which all confess to be indefensible and most profess to deplore, GOD still continues to reside in His holy Temple at Jerusalem, and has attracted to Him the hearts of all people; we need not fear that He continues to reside with those who elsewhere carry out the several rites the diversity of which does not absolutely repel Him there. At any rate, we have still among us Priest and Sacrifice. We have the Cross reared on our altars, where His Body is broken and His Blood poured forth—the place of His Crucifixion; and in the same sacred enclosure is the place of His Burial—the sacred font. Every Church, then, properly so called, is a Calvary and a Holy Sepulchre; and, though not locally in

[1] The Rev. G. Williams, the author of "The Holy City," has propounded a scheme having for its object the education of Eastern Christians in colleges to be built for them at Cambridge. Mr. Williams is now also seeking to induce the authorities of the American Church to act with the Convocation of Canterbury, in propounding some general scheme of intercommunion with the Russian Church.

Jerusalem, is yet associated with it, conveying the same blessings, to those who have faith to receive them, as that in the Holy City does.

Thus wonderfully have been fulfilled the words, "The hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, ye shall worship the FATHER." The old Temple is gone, a new one has taken its place, and that new one is reproduced everywhere, wherein the carnal things of the Jews are really spiritualized, not by violent dislocation of accustomed thoughts, but by that which is the central idea of proper worship—sacrifice.

The LORD resides in His Temple at Jerusalem, though since the days of Habakkuk He has changed the site; and His new abode there is the type and assurance of His Presence wherever He has set His home. The peculiar favour with which He blesses those who with faith and reverence draw near to the actual scene of His humiliation and Resurrection He also extends to all who approach with the like disposition, in all the temples dedicated to His Name, the same mysteries offered by the ministry of His appointment. He draws His faithful servants round the great Sacrament of His love, and encourages them to hope and pray for the restoration of unity.

But assuredly GOD'S Presence with us should

teach us one thing, and that is, to be silent or circumspect in His Presence. Surely wrangling, and disputing, and unsubdued tempers, are not indications of fitting dispositions with which to greet Him! Shall our voices be angry and uproarious before Him Who earnestly longs to bind us into one? We can all see the inconsistency of these things when displayed on the scene of His death and burial at Jerusalem. Shall we not, then, confess it to be equally inconsistent to give way to such tempers on any spot which has been consecrated to His service?

If each individual member of the Church could for one year be persuaded to look upon his own sins and shortcomings exclusively, unity would be restored. It is anger against others,—it is the necessity imposed upon each to watch that the Faith be not impaired, *ne quid damni capiat ecclesia,*—which is the source of so much of the religious strife that abounds. But bear in mind that the Lord is not in the whirlwind of popular tumult. He is not in the earthquake of contending factions; He is not in the fire of fierce passions; but He speaks with a still small voice to those silent listeners who realize His Presence. This we all confess; and I will beg of you who do something more than merely assent to the truth of what I say

to have this subject very particularly in your thoughts, and, at the four seasons, to remember those especially in your prayers to whom is committed the feeding of the flock, that they may ever lead their people to follow those things which make for peace; and, whilst not compromising any doctrine which is committed to their keeping, that they may, in the words of our own Prayer Book, both themselves hold, and also teach others to "hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life."

H. H.

SERMON II.

WORK FOR RE-UNION.

BARUCH IV. 20.

"I HAVE PUT OFF THE ROBE OF PEACE, AND HAVE PUT UPON ME THE SACKCLOTH OF SUPPLICATION, AND I WILL CRY TO THE MOST HIGH."

IF our Blessed LORD were to revisit the earth, methinks, He would illustrate His appearance in the midst of Christendom, by gathering together in the unity of faith, the millions who have gone astray after their own conceits, into the dark and dry places of heresy, far from the light that burns on the altar, and far from the streams that flow out of the Heart which was broken on Calvary. But it has not pleased Him to come into the world in the latter half of the nineteenth century; and indeed, there is no necessity why He should consecrate by the touch of His sandals, the pavements of our cities,

and entrance the nations of the earth by the music of that Voice which was lifted up some twenty centuries ago, in the courts of the Temple, and amidst the lilies of the field; for, before He ascended into heaven, He established His Church, which was designed to continue to the end of time, the work He began. He placed Her on a rock, visible to the universal world, enriched with the deposit of truth, and filled with the power of GOD. All this CHRIST Himself acknowledges in these words:—

"On this rock I will build My Church." "He who hears you hears Me." "As I have been sent by the FATHER, so I also send you." And, "Lo, I am with you all days."

The Church, then, is another form which the Word has assumed, and under which guise He lives, moves, and has His being in the midst of men. The Church and CHRIST are convertible terms; the one may be taken for the other, inasmuch as the power and the authority of the Church is the power and the authority of CHRIST.

But is it not strange, that with the Church in the midst of Christendom, there can exist so many Churches? Whence is this? Is it that the Church is less able now than she was in former ages, to gather around the Cross whole tribes and nations? No: and evidence is not

wanting to demonstrate this.[1] Is it that the Voice which tamed the swelling waves of the sea, and hushed the angry winds, has ceased to speak through her lips? No; this cannot be, for CHRIST promised to be with the Church as long as the world should last. Why, then, is it, that Christendom is divided? It is because men have shut their eyes to the evidences of the Church's authority to teach and to be obeyed. With their own hands they have extinguished the light that was in them, and now they are seated in darkness outside the very gates of the house of GOD.

And surely He Who bore the Cross on His own shoulders, and Who once died, but now lives in the Church, must regret the loss of those souls who have forsaken the one fold of the one Shepherd. And as Rachel wept of old, so must the bride of CHRIST deplore her lost ones; for indeed, those whom she begot in Baptism, and who have turned their backs on their mother, are lost, unless they return to her bosom and feast on the Eucharistic banquet which is already and always laid out for them in the sanctuary of their true home. Who, then, knowing that the Sacred Heart yearns for those strayed ones, and that the Church weeps over them tears that can come only from

[1] "The Christian Missions." Marshall.

a mother's eyes, could refuse to do what lies in his power to satisfy the longings of the one, and to dry up the tears of the other? To do this, is the sole aim and ambition of those who are engaged in the attempt to re-unite Christendom. They seek to bring the separated Churches into visible communion, so that there may be but one holy, catholic, and apostolical Church —the Bride of CHRIST.

But many, when invited to take part in the work of re-union, are tempted to ask—what can they do in such an undertaking? They will point out many a difficulty to be encountered, and describe the magnificent outlines of the work to be done, and will conclude that the whole matter is a pious day-dream, and an impossibility. The greatness of the work and their own littleness, is too much of a contrast for them. But who is it that will say, that the re-union of Christendom cannot be realized by Him Who created the world out of nothing? Is not the whole history of Christianity a splendid demonstration that there "is no word impossible with GOD?" Is not the past an earnest of the future? And what has been done, can it not be done again? The past, then, is bright with hope. If any one, however, can still regard the re-union of Christendom as an undertaking similar to the efforts of the child, whose out-

stretched hand would fain touch the stars, he has only to read and study the following words of the SON of GOD:

"Amen, amen, I say to you: if you ask the FATHER anything in My Name, He will give it you. Hitherto you have not asked anything in My Name. Ask, and you shall receive; that your joy may be full."—S. John xvi. 23, 24. "Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and you shall find: knock, and it shall be opened to you. For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth: and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened."—S. Matthew, vii. 7, 8.

He Who made such promises, can beyond all doubt redeem them; nay, He can and does satisfy the demands of this world of ours, and of those others that float and glitter in the skies. The sentences, then, which we have taken out of the New Testament, destroy every objection raised against the possibility of the reunion of Christendom. And it is worthy of notice, that the promises made by our Blessed LORD, are of the most ample character; for what can be more so than these: "knock, and it shall be opened;" "seek, and you shall find," and, "whatever you ask the FATHER in My Name, He will give it you?"

Now to attain the union of the scattered millions who have strayed away from the

Church, by gathering them all together in the oneness of faith, we have to "ask," "seek," and "knock;" and the meaning of these words, according to such gifted authors and authorities as S. Augustine, Venerable Bede, and S. Alphonso, is PRAYER. They say that to ask, to seek, and to knock, is to pray. Prayer, therefore, can obtain the re-union of Christendom; and prayer is the means to this end. Ample, however, as are the promises of our Blessed SAVIOUR, they are not by any means *unconditional.* It is not sufficient that we should "ask," "knock," and "seek," for the union of Christendom; but we must do so *in the Name of Jesus Christ.* "If you ask the FATHER anything in My Name," says our Divine LORD, "He will give it you." This condition is calculated to heighten confidence in the work of re-union, as it is an undertaking which stands in the same relation to the thrice blessed Name of CHRIST, as the shadow does to the substance; for in the work of union there can be no other end proposed, but the honour and the glory of JESUS CHRIST. Beyond all question it is an enterprise that cannot crown its promoters with the tangible rewards and honour of the world. In seeking, then, to gather together and re-unite the divided portions of Christendom, and to make them as are CHRIST and the FA-

THER,—One,—no man can have the most distant hope of any earthly reward. It is altogether a work undertaken in, and consecrated to the glory of the blessed Name of JESUS.

But prayer for the re-union of Christendom has been already made, and as yet with no apparent success. It has been offered for the union of the Churches in every quarter of the world,—in the stately cathedrals of Europe, and in the log-made chapels of the colonies; it has arisen from the lonely cells of anchorites; and it has been breathed by a thousand saints, whose names are the burden of the Church's hymns. The Catholic world has prayed, and is still praying for union. This cannot be denied; yet who will say that it has been all in vain? Divided as Christendom already is, would it not have been more so without the prayers for its union? This is known only to the angels with the golden censers filled with incense; and we may justly presume that prayer has prevented greater divisions among Christians.

Say, however, that such prayers have been productive of no good in the cause of union,—(and this is indeed difficult to believe,)—what will this prove against the efficacy of prayer? Will it show that prayer is powerless? Certainly not, as CHRIST has said that prayer

made in His Name will be heard; and S. Philip Neri has not hesitated to assert that it is all but omnipotent. It is a lever that can raise the world. Instead of depreciating the power of prayer, would it not be far more reverent, and also more prudent, to ask—Have all the prayers offered for the re-union of Christendom been sincere? For let it not be forgotten that prayer is an empty form of words, a mockery, and a sin, without sincerity. Perhaps this truth is sufficient to explain why the noble oak of Christianity has lost in the tempest that is sweeping over the world much of its foliage and some of its branches. Anyhow it suggests the necessity of *testing* prayer. And surely the prayers poured forth for so holy an end as the re-union of the separated Churches, around the altar on which is offered the "pure oblation," are as worthy of being proved as the piece of suspected gold which is submitted to the action of an acid. What, then, is the test of the sincerity of the prayers to be offered for the progress of union? The test which methinks ought to be applied to such prayers is *self-denial.* And not without reason is such a proof of sincerity proposed; for our blessed LORD has Himself selected it as the means of testing His followers. "If any man," He says, "will follow Me, *let him deny himself.*" But how is

self-denial to be applied in the case under notice, and what form is the proof to take? As regards the form it is to assume, I may say that the Baptist's camel-hair and Anthony's solitude are too severe: the penances of the saints are not likely to be practised. But though the form need not be such as that which pleased S. Rose of Lima and Blessed Leonard of Port Maurice, yet self-denial can be exercised without long vigils and exhausting fasts. Even divested of every mark of severity, and hidden from the searching eye of daily companions, self-sacrifice may do its work, and that too effectually. It is difficult, however, to state exactly what mortifications may be used as a test of the sincerity of prayer for the great and holy object of union; but it is easy enough to *hint* at them. For instance, a prayer for those who have wronged us; a glass of water left untouched when pressed by thirst to take it; an alms to the poor, an offering to a church, a visit to a lonely invalid,—when frequently and *systematically* practised, and offered along with our prayers for the union of Christendom, cannot but test their sincerity. It is not so much the smallness or the greatness of the mortifications that is to be considered, but it is their *continuance*. It would, indeed, be easy to do each of them once only; but to continue one

of these day after day, and year after year, and thereby constantly to sacrifice self, is no mean test of any man's sincerity, and will most certainly plead eloquently with the Powers in favour of our prayers offered for the union of Christendom. Of this we need have no doubt, as the highest authority has told us that a cup of cold water, given in the name of a prophet, will meet with a prophet's reward. Will not, then, the sufferings endured in the name of union, meet with the rewards of union?[1]

And besides being a test of the prayers offered for the union of Christendom, self-denial is itself a prayer no less acceptable than that which is made with the lips, and is as certain of being heard. Hence some masters of the spiritual life say that the every-day actions of men and their voluntary and sober sufferings can all be converted into prayer, by merely offering them with a pure intention to God. Thus then the self-denials which are practised as a test of the sincerity of the prayer made for the union of Christendom, can also become a prayer rising beyond the clouds as fragrant incense, and will be all the more acceptable to Him Who bore the Cross, and commanded His followers to walk in His footsteps, which were all turned in the direction of Calvary.

[1] S. Francis de Sales and Ven. Jean Avila.

And here, Christians, I cannot refrain from citing a passage from the life of Sister Emmerich, which has a striking application to prayer mingled with self-denial and suffering for the re-union of Christendom :[1]—"The signification of my sufferings in all my limbs," she said, "was explained to me in the following vision :—I saw a gigantic human body in a horrible state of mutilation, and raised upwards towards the sky. There were no fingers or toes on the hands and feet; the body was covered with frightful wounds, some of which were fresh and bleeding, others covered with dead flesh or turned into excrescences. The whole of one side was black, and as it were half eaten away. I suffered as though it had been my own body, and then my guide said to me, 'This is the Body of the Church, the body of all men and thine also.' Then pointing to each wound, he showed to me at the same time some part of the world. I saw an infinite number of men and nations separated from the Church, all in their own peculiar way. . . . . Then my guide said to me, 'Let thy sufferings teach thee a lesson, and offer them to GOD for all who are separated.'"

And, oh, Christians, when we behold on all

[1] "Dolorous Passion of CHRIST," by Sister Catharine Emmerich.

sides the divisions that are rending the seamless garment of CHRIST, the altars without a priesthood, and the Holy Scriptures profaned by men having less genius and wit than Voltaire, but not less boldness,—who can remain inactive and unzealous for the glory of GOD'S Church? and who will not seek to restore unity to Christendom by prayer, proved to be sincere in the fire of sacrifice—the sacrifice of self? Oh, what can give more consolation in the supreme hour of existence to our hearts, wearied with the long struggle of the last sickness, than the thought that we have done what lay in our power to exalt the honour and the glory of the Christian name?

Let us end as we began, by saying that if our blessed SAVIOUR were to revisit the earth, He would seek to reunite Christendom in the One Fold of the One Shepherd. He would stand, methinks, in the midst of the Christian nations, and bid them mark the prints of the nails and the lance on His glorified Body, and directing their tear-filled eyes towards His Church seated on a hill, would command them to pass through her gates.

D. C.

SERMON III.

THE JOY OF UNITY.

Ps. CXXXIII. 1.

"BEHOLD HOW GOOD AND JOYFUL A THING IT IS, BRETHREN, TO DWELL TOGETHER IN UNITY."

FOR what, dear brethren, is it which makes any great secular undertaking successful, any great nation prosperous, any cause, political or otherwise, surmount all obstacles, and finally triumph? Is it not that they who have taken up that cause or scheme, or who belong to that nation, have united together to do that which, as so many separate atoms, they would have been powerless to effect? And if this be the case in the things of the present world, how much more is it so with those of eternity! If an earthly kingdom prospers according to the obedience and unity of its subjects, how much

more the kingdom of Divine Grace, even the Holy Catholic Church! Truly, it was by the inspiration of the Blessed SPIRIT of GOD that holy David uttered that grand and sweet truth, too much forgotten, "How good and joyful a thing it is to dwell together in unity!"

It is surely the most reasonable thing, view it in what aspect you will, to hold that the servants of the True GOD should live together in unity; for whether we consider the mystery of the Divine Nature—Three Persons united in One GOD—or whether we observe His dealings with men from the very beginning; setting a bitter curse upon Cain, the first author of envy and strife; punishing the builders of Babel with diversity of tongues; bringing a new death upon Dathan and Abiram for their rebellion against His servant Moses; inspiring David with the joyous Psalm from which the text is taken; or, being made Man, pronouncing a blessing upon the peacemakers, and a curse on them that refuse to hear the Church; always we find the Divine character of unity enforced, and the wickedness of disunion condemned in the most clear and forcible manner. How touching is our Adorable SAVIOUR'S prayer for us the night before He suffered,—"that they all may be *one*, as Thou, FATHER, art in Me, and I in Thee; that they also may be *one* in

Us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me!" And yet the Nature, and the Commands, and the Prayer, of GOD, alike seem unavailing to stir up our dull perceptions to the beauty of unity.

"GOD is not the Author of division, but of concord;" and so we can well understand how it was that our dear LORD ere He suffered, in His instructions to His Apostles, stamped the Holy Church they were to found on earth with the impress of Divine unity. "He that heareth you, heareth Me;" "He that refuseth to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican;" "Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained;" "Go ye into all the world, and preach THE GOSPEL to every creature, baptizing them in the Name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST;"—in such words as these did He give authority to His Apostles to rule the One Church, and set it forth as the one way of salvation.

Unity, then, such as is pleasing in GOD's sight, is only attained by ready submission in all things to the doctrine and discipline of the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of CHRIST, purchased at no less a price than the most precious and adorable Blood of GOD, and

sustained by no meaner food than His most sacred Body. How very just is the claim of that our holy Mother to our obedience, when inspired Scripture tells us that she is the Spouse of CHRIST, "the pillar and ground of the Truth;" and how clear it is that they who preach another Gospel, or set up another system than that which can trace its pedigree up to the great day of Pentecost, must be building on a quicksand, and incurring the heavy wrath of GOD!

Some may ask, "What is this Catholic Church to which you bid me obey?" Divine Scripture, brethren, gives us certain notes of the Church, by which we may clearly distinguish her from the mushroom sects which have sprung up in such abundance in these latter days; for we read in the Acts of the holy Apostles of the three thousand sóuls who first joined the Catholic Church one thousand eight hundred and twenty-nine years ago, that "they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." And of these four notes let me say a few words, for they have sounded forth more or less distinctly in all ages of the Church's history, and they may be heard now, even though the Seamless Robe be torn, and the One True Sacrifice despised and set aside by a faithless generation.

First, then, Apostolic *doctrine* is a note of Catholic unity; and where shall we find that doctrine embalmed and laid up as an heritage for ever, but in the Creeds of the Catholic Church, and above all that one which bears the name and the authority of the holy Apostles? There, as in a summary of the whole faith, does Apostolic tradition gather together and set before men, as necessary to salvation, the whole teaching of the Sacred Scriptures—the true nature and attributes of GOD the HOLY TRINITY —the consoling verities of the Life and Passion of the WORD made flesh, Son of Mary, two natures united in One Person, and that the Person of the Only-begotten of the FATHER—the unity and authority of the Holy Catholic Church, guided and inspired by the ever-blessed Paraclete—her Sacraments, the true means of justification through the remission of sins, and the sure and certain hope of a life to come, in which body and soul will have part at the resurrection of the just.

Now, he who breaks one commandment is guilty, S. James tells us, of the whole; so, he who disbelieves or doubts one point of the Faith is not of the community of the faithful, and has broken the bond of unity. It is the Catholic Church alone who requires her children to profess, either themselves, or by their sponsors, all these articles of the Christian faith,

ere she seals them as GOD's children in the regenerating waters of Baptism.

Such, then, is the unity of faith or doctrine. Again, the faithful continued in the Apostles' *fellowship;* and this is the unity of *obedience.* It was meet that the kingdom of GOD, which was to bring under its sweet yoke all the nations of the earth, should have an organized system of government. GOD made men social, such that they needed laws and rulers to preserve peace, and promote prosperity among themselves; and in His dealings with mankind He ever adapts Himself to that nature which He Himself formed in them: and so, when He chose out the children of Israel for a peculiar people, to set His Name there and manifest forth His glory, He gave them laws by the ministry of Angels from Mount Sinai, and a priesthood to teach those laws to the people, and a ruler to govern them in His Name. And thus in the Church, of which Israel was but a type, He hath given us a Law which shall not be broken, and a Priesthood after the order of Melchisedech (i.e. a *lasting* one). He founded it when He gave His Apostles their commission of binding and loosing—"Whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained; and whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted:" of offering the Eucharistic Sacrifice—"This *do* (lit. *offer*) in

remembrance of Me:" and of teaching with authority and baptizing—"Whoso heareth you heareth Me, and he that despiseth you despiseth Me;" "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature, baptizing them in the Name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST; and LO, I AM WITH YOU ALL DAYS, EVEN UNTO THE END OF THE WORLD." And from the day that those glorious words were spoken even until now has the commission of the Apostles been handed down by unbroken succession in the threefold order of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons; ay, and will be handed down so long as the world lasts, and there are souls struggling for victory in the Church militant. This is the constitution of the one true Church, ordained by the holy Apostles under the inspiration of the blessed SPIRIT of GOD; and this fellowship of, or obedience to, the Apostles, is the second note of unity, by which we may clearly discern the Church of CHRIST. That this Apostolic authority has been handed down unbroken to the present day we have the plainest evidence in Holy Scripture, and in ecclesiastical and other history. So that, if we would have part in the blessings of Pentecost, we must take heed that we are in the Apostles' fellowship. "Ubi Episcopus, ibi Ecclesia"—"Where the Bishop is,

there is the Church." This is the ancient rule, and no sect or heretical body among us can show this note of unity. Blessed Ignatius, just before his martyrdom, wrote to his spiritual children: "As many as are of GOD and of JESUS CHRIST are with the Bishop;" and again, "When I was among you, I cried out and spake with a loud voice, 'Obey the Bishop, and the Presbytery, and the Deacons.'"

The third note of Unity is that of the most Holy Eucharist, 'the breaking of bread.' This, at once, the one tremendous and unbloody Sacrifice foretold by the prophet Malachi, and the adorable Sacrament of most Divine Love, was given by our dear SAVIOUR to His Church as the sweetest pledge of His undying affection, "the supersubstantial food," as it was called of old, of all holy souls. In the place of the many sacrifices, shadows of the true, which GOD's people offered Him of old, this one oblation of the "Lamb of GOD that taketh away the sins of the world," was instituted on the Vigil of the Passion to be a perpetual memory of that His precious Death until His coming again; and as there is but one Sacrifice so it is offered only in the one Church, as says again S. Ignatius, "Be zealous therefore to frequent the one Eucharist, for one is the Flesh of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and one the Chalice in the unity

of His Blood, one Altar, as there is one Bishop, with the Priests and Deacons, my fellow-servants." "Where the carcase is," says our Blessed LORD, "thither will the eagles be gathered together," so where the Blessed Sacrament of the altar is, there will all faithful Catholics be united, to offer in union with the Priest, and to feed upon, that most blessed and adorable Flesh and Blood. How can 'they that are without' consecrate the Body of CHRIST, having received no Apostolic commission, and how can they live towards GOD without It, seeing He has said, "Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you?" O then, dear brethren, while you reflect on this note of Unity, take heed that you use It to your soul's health with penitent and faithful hearts, and pray GOD in union with this blessed sacrifice, that all men may be brought to partake of this one food of Eternal life, this medicine for sin-sick souls!

In almost the self-same words is this divine Sacrifice offered now, as it was in the days of the Holy Apostles, and throughout the world in the present day is the form of offering the 'pure Oblation' substantially identical. Amid all the sad schisms and heresies which have threatened to take away the very life of the Catholic Church, this one Sacrifice has been

the rallying-point of the faithful; and, spite of the short-comings of this or that branch of the Church, we may well hope that It may propitiate the FATHER, and by His blessing kindle anew in her her first love, and restore the visible unity which was once her chiefest glory.

I have transgressed too far on your time to say much as to the fourth point, viz., unity of *prayer*, that communion of saints, by which—

> "the whole round earth is every way
> Bound by gold chains about the feet of GOD."

It is as essential to the spiritual life as breathing is to the bodily,—it is in answer to prayer that GOD wills to grant His choicest blessings, and it is by intercession for one another that we must practise that mutual love to which the beloved Apostle exhorts us, "Little children, love one another." It is a truth replete with comfort and to be firmly held and acted upon, that the whole Church of CHRIST prays for every several part, and each individual member thereof, and that these in their turn are bound to pray for the whole Church, and every other part of it. "Part of the host have crossed the flood," even the cold river of death, "and part are crossing now;" but that transit breaks not the bond of love—the Church is in Heaven and in Paradise, as well as on earth, and the visible and invisible are linked together by this golden

chain of prayer. Cease not then night and day to lift up your voices to God for all blessings upon the Church and every member thereof, and for those without her pale, that they may see ere it be too late their error, and return to the one fold and its sweet pasture, and find rest unto their souls!

And now that we have defined these marks by which the Catholic Church may clearly be discerned, is there one body on earth as a city set on a hill, a beacon in a high place, which can alone exhibit them, and to which we must flee, as Noah and his sons into the Ark, if we would be saved? Yes, and No. Yes, there is such a body, for God has left Himself nowhere without witness, and in all places where the Gospel has been preached, there is planted a branch of the Church teaching all truth, condemning all error, and holding communion with the Head, even Christ, by those four means whereof I have spoken. And yet alas, the Church is not at one in herself. Wicked men, and the fury of evil spirits, have combined to rend what was called the Seamless Robe of Christ, and the necessary consequence followed that, having lost the fulness of Divine guidance by her loss of unity, heresies and errors within and without have multiplied, and she has not strength to suppress them. When bright and

beautiful she went forth from Jerusalem after her Pentecostal Baptism, to convert the nations and to subdue every creature to the easy yoke of CHRIST'S obedience, then she was one indeed, and the nations bowed before her, and kings were her nursing fathers, and their queens her nursing mothers. Then out of her fruitful womb proceeded Martyrs, Confessors, Virgins, in bright and glorious array, and the Stone cut without hands bid fair to fill the whole earth. But heresies arose, and sought to poison the life-blood of the Spouse of CHRIST. Arianism, Nestorianism, Eutychianism, one after another, denied some vital truth, and were condemned and cut off by the decrees of the most august assemblies the world had ever witnessed, the infallible General Councils of the Church. And then as time wore on, and the Roman Empire was broken up, there arose jealousy between nation and nation, and so Church was set up against Church, and Patriarchs against Pontiffs; and though for some centuries external unity was preserved, there were bitter jealousies and heartburnings between the Church of the East and the Church of the West. But still, on the whole, there was unity, and the Gospel kingdom was advanced, until all Europe owned its sway. And then, at last, the evil one succeeded in making the first sad rent in the Robe of CHRIST,

and East and West presented the sad spectacle of a house divided against itself. But this was not enough for his hellish malice. Ere long the half-extinguished spark of ancient heresies burst out into a flame, and the internal corruptions of the Church inspired such men as Wicliffe and Luther and Calvin to form the parricidal idea of setting up a new religion, and making war against their Mother. Frenzied impiety, and cold-hearted infidelity, went hand in hand to marshal the fight, and the North of Europe was for the most part torn from Catholic Unity. England, as has most frequently been its lot, suffered greatly by the general disturbance, yet not so vitally as the rest; and while internal dissensions and State tyranny severed her from the Churches of the West, the goodness of God preserved to her the Apostolical Succession and the deposit of the Faith once delivered to the Saints; and this her heritage has never been torn from her. Misunderstandings, and the bitter spirit of controversy, and the evil influence of Puritanism in high places, have done much to bring her low; but, thank God, these days have witnessed a revival of Catholic verities which show plainly that her candlestick has not been removed out of its place, and the Light of the Truth shines out more and more clearly spite of the wrath and persecution of the world.

Scotland has indeed been brought very low, yet there too a remnant are to be found who have not touched the unclean thing, and whom not the bitterest persecution availed to withdraw from the Ancient Faith. O let us pray GOD then, dear brethren, that all these blessed indications may tend to that one consummation which alone can settle and establish them according to the will of GOD, a re-union of the Church Militant against her old enemies the world, the flesh, and the devil! O how would a thousand flee at the rebuke of one, and how would the nations be gathered unto the standard of the Cross were we once more at one! Yea, and what joy would there be in heaven among the holy angels, and those happy souls under the altar who cry, "How long? how long?" if this blessed union were to take place!

And the way and means whereby we may all help on this most glorious cause is, to pray to GOD continually for the return of religious unity, and specially in union with the Unbloody Sacrifice of the Immaculate Lamb of GOD. Many of you belong to an association for this purpose; those who do not will do well to join it. Moreover, let Christian charity rule in your heart; *love* the brotherhood, and seek not disputes, but peace. Find out wherein we agree together, not wherein we differ, and so

manifest forth to them that are without how good and joyful a thing it is to dwell together in unity. Again, unflinchingly profess and practise the Catholic Faith, which you have received to hold, that those who belong to the same Faith in another obedience may plainly know you for brethren.

Remember that, before the great Day of the LORD shall come, there will be a falling away, and Antichrist shall be revealed. How urgent a reason is this for us to unite together, lest we should be overcome in that fearful conflict. GOD's blessing is only on those who are of one mind in a house (i.e. the house of the Church), and we must pray, and fast, and work for the return of peace in our severed communions, if we would have part of that blessed triumph when CHRIST shall reign with His saints here below, and "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge and glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."

G. A.

SERMON IV.

THE CHURCH'S UNITY.

S. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

"Going therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold, I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the world. Amen."

The longing after union with the rest of the human race is one of the innate desires of the heart of man. Insufficient for himself, he feels an aching want for the companionship of his fellows. To exist in utter isolation would drive him to madness. Man was not made to live alone. He has thoughts, affections, desires and conceptions of the understanding, which it were a pain to have without the power of communicating to others; so likewise he has capacities of receiving from others, sympathies with

them in their joys and sorrows, expectation of their love, the loss of which would desolate his whole being. Man must be considered as one whole, each individual being but a part of this whole. To cut man off from his fellows is like dividing in sunder the different limbs of the body. Mankind feels drawn together, for they are the same flesh and blood. They are necessary to each other's wellbeing; to separate them is an act of rude violence, since they are all part of one Adam. Sin, however, has caused this separation to take place in part, but the desires of the heart remain still, though inarticulate, and like groanings of a spirit which are felt but cannot be uttered.

Man feels the desires for union with his fellows, but the accomplishment even in idea of these desires is almost beyond the reach of his obscured intellect, and like a phantom baffles his imagination, refusing to take any fixed or settled form. What was it that almost in the infancy of the world produced the tower of Babel but the fear lest men should be scattered up and down all over the face of the world? The desire for union was good, but the mode of securing it, not of GOD, so He brought all to nought by confounding the language of the builders. Again history informs us of many great kings, whose desires were not only to

have universal dominion, but also to unite all mankind in the same religion, and to make them to be governed by the same laws. What was this but another attempt of the intellect of man grasping after the idea of union? The same strange yearning it is which has given birth to our modern socialism, and has been the spring of the numerous societies of men banded together with peculiar watchwords of their own, and signs by which they may be known to each other. Some of these societies have at times spread far and wide, outstripping even the boundaries of European states, and numbering thousands upon thousands within their pale, all bound together, and that by bonds the most stringent to act together in whatever cause shall be set before them, and continually to assist, support, and labour for each other, even at the greatest personal cost or risk. Here was a union, not forced, but voluntary, of men of different nations and families, based however upon certain principles held in common, and working for a supposed common good.

The same yearning after union causes many religious minds of the present day, to search out for some cardinal points of Christian Doctrine as a common bond, whilst the other points shall be held to be immaterial. It shall not matter to what community a Christian belongs,

whether Episcopal or non-Episcopal, provided only he hold the cardinal points specified and live accordingly. Others go a step further and have an idea of a more definite union. There must be an uninterrupted succession of validly-ordained Bishops and pastors from Apostolic times as the link to bind every age of the Christians together, and to preserve the Sacraments as channels of grace. Thus without any external Communion of Christians with each other, a real union is supposed essentially to exist. Do not all these dreams and theories of men show what are the cravings of the human heart? Do they not testify the desires of man's heart for unity with his brethren? But where, my brethren, is the true bond which shall closely knit all men together into one? It must not be a merely external bond. That will not suffice of itself. True and perfect union consists of two things, an internal and an external union. Without these two the heart of man would remain unsatisfied. Those who are inwardly one long to show forth this oneness by some clear external sign. It is felt that the oneness can never be complete or real whilst the external exhibition of it is lacking. Again, whilst external union cements and is the necessary complement of internal oneness, yet of what value is it by itself? To be in out-

ward show at union when within at warfare,—not only does this not satisfy, but it is an intolerable yoke which galls and frets the subjects of it, till by an act of violence the yoke is thrown off, and the bonds burst in sunder. In true oneness with others there must be a union of heart, of intellect, and even of life; that is, we must live the same life, our intellect must perceive the same truths, and our heart love the same objects. To live, to know, to love, these three things man has, which cannot be satisfied out of union. Those we know as estimable we love, we wish to live entirely united to them and with them. Where, then, is this union which our whole being pants for,—where is it to be obtained? Where are we to satisfy that thirst for love, for knowledge, and union of life? Where shall we find that bond which shall make of all peoples of the earth one people, of all the families of the earth one family, of all men one man? Where, except in the Church of the Living God? She is the binder up of the breach, the regenerator of the human family, the tie by which all are united again to each other in God.

God provided a means by which the scattered human family might be gathered together, regenerated, and endowed with gifts such as human nature had never known before. No one

was to be shut out. The Gentile and the Jew, the bond and the free, were to lose the things peculiar to them and become one—not as a united corporation of individuals, but as a living body: one majestic structure of living stones: not merely stones piled one upon another, and fastened together from without, but living stones internally connected and vivified by an unseen spiritual principle and energy.

For this purpose GOD sent His SON into the world, that, taking human nature to Himself, He might make it the medium of regeneration for the rest of the human family. He, as man, was to be Head of the renewed human nature, and an inexhaustible Fountain of regeneration to all mankind. It pleased the FATHER, says the Apostle, "that in Him should all fulness dwell;" and S. John says, "Of His fulness we have all received." According to His Own testimony of Himself, "I came that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Fulness was then placed by the FATHER in JESUS CHRIST; and He, that all men might have life through Him, poured the same fulness into His Church, and made her the receptacle of all His riches and graces; for the Church is "the fulness of Him Who is filled all in all." It is by means of His Church that CHRIST penetrates every single soul amongst the faithful;

and as life is whole in every smallest member of the body, so every Christian has a full possession of the life of CHRIST. And though some have a more honourable place in the body than others, yet all partake alike of the fulness of its life; all are bound together and perfectly joined in one interest and one aim, all are guided by the same Spirit. The chaff, indeed, which in times of peace remains in the Church largely intermingled with the wheat, but not belonging to the soul of the Church, have no part in the fulness of the life of CHRIST, being merely in outward show united to Him.

The Church, then, is the mustard-seed of the Gospel, coming in appearance small and vile, yet destined by its hidden virtue to become a great tree, under whose shadow the beasts of the field should rest, and in whose branches the swift-winged ones should build their nests. So it has ever been, the loftiest intelligences and the most ignorant of mankind alike find their home in the Church. CHRIST filled the Church with His own fulness, and having given her the legacy of His plenitude, He commissioned her to continue His work. The Church not only received His mantle and a double portion of His Spirit, but became the extension of Himself; so real is her union with Him. Her life is His life, her wisdom His wisdom, her love

His love. It is alone through Him that she is enabled to do what she does. Never could she have had strength to endure the persecutions which vowed to root out her very memorial from the earth, had it not been for His force, who within her quickens and sustains her. Never could she have detected, exposed, and refuted the specious errors of heretical minds, had it not been for His Divine Wisdom, which penetrates and illuminates her; never could she have carried on her labour of love, but for His love which inflames her; and never could she have survived the continual losses which she sustains, in those members of her body which corrupt and die off, had it not been for the energy of His life with which she is endued. As it is, however, amidst all reverses, she lives on and flourishes; and, when seemingly about to perish, she rises up in new strength, more glorious than ever before. As dying, behold, she lives; as chastised, yet not killed,—as sorrowful, but always rejoicing,—as cast down, but not in despair,—as having nothing, yet possessing all things. Our God, delighting to make men His co-operators, and having Himself with great pain achieved the redemption of the human race, commissioned the Church, as the extension of Himself, to fulfil the remainder of the work in gathering the redeemed into the

oneness of His Body. For this reason He makes over to her His Own powers: "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My FATHER hath appointed unto Me." "As My FATHER hath sent Me, even so I send you." "He that heareth you, heareth Me." And why does He give this plenitude of His power? It is for the building up of the rest of His Church: "Going, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST, teaching them to observe whatever I have commanded you; and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world."

Behold, then, the extent of the mission of the Catholic Church world-wide, and the length of its endurance measured by the duration of the world; the object of her mission, the extension of the Body of CHRIST; the system of teaching all CHRIST's truths to be upheld by her; the power by which she should be enabled to do the work, the presence of CHRIST's fulness always abiding in her. Behold here a key to the Church's conduct.

Having received from CHRIST the command to increase and multiply, to replenish the earth and subdue it, she dared not remain quiescent. His kingdom was to be, not in one nation only or one country, but it must be catholic, uni-

versal, everywhere. Therefore, though she knew beforehand that persecutions and afflictions awaited her in every city, yet this did not hinder her; nor did she count even life dear, if only she might fulfil her course, and do the work which the LORD has laid upon her. Even before the death of the Apostles, the Church had spread her kingdom far into all lands, East and West. Multitudes of all nations had been gathered together into her fold. There was not, even before their martyrdom, so large and well connected a body politic on the earth, unless it had been the Roman empire; and ever since that time till the present day there has continued in all lands this same one body, bearing the ancient name, doing the ancient work, one and without division. In spite of opposition, she has maintained herself marvellously in every land against the power of the world. Trampled under foot and pierced with wounds, her blood has been the seed of fresh conquests. Having neither the sword, the glittering spear, or the shield, she has gone on conquering and to conquer. Silently and noiselessly on her part was the temple built. She did not contend or cry out, nor was her voice heard in the streets; but, ere men were aware of it, the kingdom of GOD had been formed amongst them. The very ends of the earth were promised to

the MESSIAH as part of His kingdom, and so it has come to pass through the instrumentality of His Church.

The world was already Christian, and the masters of the world knew it not. At the side of the Roman Emperors,—the disgrace of humanity,—the Roman Pontiffs, the successors of S. Peter, were giving the highest examples of all saintly virtues. Diocletian made a last effort to crush the Church. A more violent persecution than ever had before been was decreed against her children. The most extraordinary pains were taken to find and destroy all the sacred books. Columns were erected to Diocletian, thanking him for having rooted out the Christian superstition. A few years passed on: Paganism fell to pieces, and Christianity mounted with Constantine on the throne. Neither persecution nor prosperity can destroy her. Before her birth underneath the Cross, she existed in a way by anticipation amongst the Jewish people, and even from the very beginning of the world. Her establishment on the earth was the aim of the thoughts of GOD, and the HOLY SPIRIT spoke of her through the mouth of the prophets. Abraham, and Moses, and David, and all the faithful of those days, belonged by anticipation of faith to the same Church which is now in all lands. Those that

went before and those that follow after CHRIST are thus united together by one link, even CHRIST Himself; and however far distant one time be from another, or one place from another, this union annihilates both time and space. The Church is a union of hearts loving the same LORD, and having communion one with another through Him. To the end of time she will continue her mission into all the world. At no time can she cease her cares for any country; but, having received a charge from JESUS CHRIST, she feels herself bound to fulfil it in all lands and at all times. Neither trouble, the fire, or the sword can keep her from doing what in her lies to discharge the duties laid upon her by Him Whose fulness has been made over to her. We may withdraw from her, but she cannot withdraw from us.

But why should the Church press herself, at such risks, among all nations and at all times? Because, to belong to her is to belong to the Body of CHRIST, to be partakers of Him in His fulness. The Church is a visible society, destined for the regeneration of man by JESUS CHRIST. She is a visible society, having certain marks of oneness, sanctity, universality, apostolicity, in order that she may be distinguished from other societies professing to be from CHRIST, but destitute of one or other of

these marks. She is visible then, and there is a striking grandeur about her, a something above the order of nature, giving token of what she is. But her object is to effect a change that is spiritual and unseen, except in its consequences: it is by union with CHRIST in His Body that this change is effected. The Church's empire, though it has a visible external organization, is yet an empire over the hearts of men. It is indeed necessary that there should be an unity of the body; this, however, is not the main business, but rather the unity of spirit. The Church admits not of being sundered, or broken up into divisions; she is always in visible union under the same pastors, but the link that joins her children together is the one faith, and the common participation in the fulness of CHRIST. The body does, no doubt, in times of peace, retain some who partake not, from worldliness or sin, in the spiritual benefits. If, however, there is a mind which cannot bear the yoke of faith, this will soon be manifested by open division, even in the times of the peace of the Church. "They went out from us," says S. John, "that it might be manifested that they were not of us." Such has been the history of all separations from the Church. An alien spirit first took possession of the mind, and the external separation was the consequence

and legitimate result of what had already taken place in the mind. The sensual ones, not having the spirit, separate themselves from the Church's fold. The heart goes first, the external separation completes the act. The Church's empire is therefore over the hearts of men. There is something in her fulness for every variety of order amongst men. She unites and brings into harmony the most opposite tendencies. The fiery enthusiasm, the impassioned devotion of the south, are there side by side with the methodical strictness and logical precision of the colder temperaments of the north. Monks and Nuns whose whole lives are spent in contemplation, and the labourer and man of business in the world, each find their place, and a rule of life suitable to their state. The learned finds in the study of her dogmas an employment for the intellect, which satisfies without palling. The ignorant in simple faith is happy in his enjoyment of religion without the puzzle of reasonings which he could never fathom. The painter, the musician, the sculptor, the architect, in the external embodiments of ecclesiastical things, find the highest calls for the greatest excellences of their respective arts. The Church is a treasury where the wants of men, natural and supernatural, can be all satisfied. The Church offers men also a treasury

where each may place in common their merits, their prayers, their offerings, their sacrifices. The common stock belongs to each and all. So that no man says that the things which he possesses are his own, but all things are in common. He that has gathered much has nothing over, and he that has gathered little has no lack. And nothing is lost for any of us; all the good that has been done, during the lapse of ages by the faithful, all the intelligence of mysteries, all the faith, all the love, form the common possession of the Body of CHRIST, and of every member of that Body. One man's fulness is the supply of another man's want. Thus the Church goes on till her members be complete, and the predestined measure of the perfection of her graces be fulfilled; till she grow up to the perfect measure of the fulness of CHRIST.

The Church has had made over to her the teaching of the nations. The deposit of truth was entrusted to her keeping, and she cannot allow it to be tampered with, nor can she bear to part with one jot or tittle of it. She has ever handed down the truths of faith untouched, undiminished. The intellect of the world has with gigantic force and with the most specious subtilty, battled against, and striven to make her yield some little point of the precious deposit, but she has ever refused. In her contest with the

heresies of different ages, she has manifested the Divine intelligence with which she is endowed, and her doctrine has only shone the more clear by means of the errors attempted to be set up in its place. Were it not for the necessity of preserving intact the Gospel truths, never could the Church have been excused for her obstinacy in refusing to allow a single change to be made in the smallest points of her doctrine. For what consequences have sometimes followed from her refusal? the rending of whole nations from her pale; of men of genius and talents who had rendered her great services; Bishops, whose lives have been a great and edifying example to the flock. But when the matter is concerning the truth of JESUS CHRIST, she hesitates not,—full of charity and sweetness as she is. She is pained, wounded to the very heart, but it must be. The truth must be transmitted entire to the end of the world.

Each of the errors which the Church has condemned was specious at the commencement, but there is not a single one, had it been adopted, which would not in the end have overthrown the entire revelation. Make but a little opening, and by that opening the whole ocean will penetrate into a vessel and it will sink. The mysteries and the teachings, the belief and the practices of the Church are so inseparably

united one to another, that to an illuminated reason, it is impossible to admit one single dogma without admitting all, or to reject a single dogma without rejecting all. The proud ones have laughed at her cautious wisdom as folly. They hate definitions, and would wish for more open speculation of the intellect; and what has this led to, but that in the noonday light of Christianity there are men who grope about in doubt as to whether they themselves exist, whether man has a soul, whether the soul and body are not one substance, whether everything is not GOD,—the stones, the plants, the beasts, their very selves of whose existence at all they are not certain? Those who have refused to believe the Church are struck with such blindness as, some of them, not to believe their own existence. Terrible punishment of pride! sublime manifestation of the GOD of the Church! The proud ones have thought to bring the teaching of the Church to nought, but she remains still, whilst her opponents wander about in endless differences and perplexities, or at last wearied out, return for rest into her bosom. She remains still steadily keeping up her position amidst all the rude shocks she sustains. Her enemies confidently, and with eagerness for the event, expect her fall. They prophesy her dissolution, but she lives on falsifying their

predictions, and only showing the more clearly the truth of the LORD's promise, that she is founded on a rock, and that the gates of Hell shall never prevail against her.

Such has been the progress of the Church in her mission. Formed out of such a multitude of nations, naturally at enmity with one another, composed of such seemingly discordant elements, had it not been for CHRIST's Spirit permeating and pervading every part, and by a Divine leaven composing and setting at one opposite tendencies, the Church must soon after her foundation have been split up into a thousand fragments. GOD keeps her One by His ruling Spirit, as He makes the soul one in spite of its various affections and faculties, and its contradictory aims. The Church of to-day has yet a great work to do, for the prophecies of GOD concerning her are as far from having had any complete fulfilment. There are glories in store for her of which she has had at present but the earnest. In filling up the last period of her existence, she has to make complete her conquest of the universe. There are prophecies which without this can have no perfect fulfilment. And the words of GOD are not like the words of men. In them is to be found no exaggeration, no hyperbole, no magnificent expression, overstating by the grandeur of

language the magnitude of the event. The truths of GOD are uttered in simple words, without any ostentatious parade or pompous elocution, and the simple statement of truths so mighty, so gigantic, is insufficient to bring them home to our feeble intelligence. We reach out after their meaning, but the immensity of it confounds us. The brightness of the vision is too much for us. There is no limit to guide the eye, and our comprehension of the designs of GOD must always fall short of the Divine idea. The thoughts of GOD are too deep for human words, too great for human intelligence to grasp. Man can find no language adequate to express them, nor can he even think worthily of them, so far are they above him. We may always be sure therefore that stretch the prophecies of the Church's greatness to the fullest possible meaning, our conception of their fulfilment will fall short of the event. We can say now with Solomon: "Blessed be the LORD, there hath not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised by the hand of Moses His servant." And with David: "Like as we have heard, so have we seen in the city of our GOD; GOD upholdeth the same for ever." But when the last glories of the Church are fulfilled, our hearts will rather fail us. There will remain no strength in us for wonder, and

we shall confess that it was a true report we heard indeed, but not the half was told us, of all the LORD would do for His Church.

We live in times big with prognostics of future events. There has been aroused a religious movement both without and within the Church, which fills with amazement those who look on it. The Church arouses her children for the struggle. Every thing gives tokens of the coming of some mighty moral crisis, when the Church and the present order of the civilised world shall have to pass through the crucible. Of the Church united with the See of Peter, we know from the Divine word that, being founded on the rock, no weapon formed against her can prosper. Her temporal power and prosperity may be awhile overclouded, nay she may be laid completely bare, but it will only be to regain them more solidly than ever. Temporal power, wealth, and influence, though in no way essential to the Church, are yet her almost necessary attendants. It is hardly possible that they for any great length of time should be absent from her hand. CHRIST Himself had offerings from kings at His Birth; during His Life He was followed by those who ministered to Him of their substance, and in His Death He had the rich man's tomb: so it is now. If the Church does not court the gifts

of the world, these gifts come to her unbidden. Power, influence, and wealth are poured into her hands, because she does not seek these things. If in any place they are sought or prized over-highly, or over-anxiety is shown for their preservation, this is just what incites men to deprive her of them. If even the wealth and influence of the Church are turned by ecclesiastics into private property, or squandered on things and for ends not religious, then it is true they will be no longer given, and what has been given will be taken away. It has been desecrated, if either it has been loved for its own sake, or has been employed for worldly grandeur. The Saints live in sackcloth: they are buried in gold and jewels. The Church's strength consists in her feebleness. Her influence is not that of gold and silver, or the weapons of war, but that GOD is with her. Her voice claims and commands, not by force of arms, but by a something supernatural given it by GOD, and before which the stoutest heart quails, even though the obedience required be refused. When the Church displays her proper gifts, her gentleness, her meekness, her suffering, when she turns the cheek to the smiter; when she repays good for evil, prays for her persecutors, then she is sure to prosper even in temporal things. Her holy sufferings are to her the

surest prelude to greatness. Other armour she has none. It was said to her in the person of her chief Pastor: "Put up thy sword into its sheath, for all they who take the sword shall perish by the sword." We have yet to behold the plenitude of the Church, when the knowledge of the LORD shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. How clear, how intelligent shall be the faith, when error having exhausted itself shall no longer lift its head, and those now visibly divided from the One True Fold shall have returned to a union necessary for them, and full of advantages for the Church, —when Judah shall no longer fight against Ephraim, nor Ephraim envy Judah, but united they shall direct their whole powers—now made One—to the complete conversion of the nations. Then will be fulfilled in its fullest sense the prophecy of peace, when nation shall not fight with nation, but their spears shall be beaten into pruning hooks, and they shall not learn war any more. The kingdoms of the world shall have become the kingdoms of CHRIST, One vast empire united in life, truth, and love, the kingdom of the Body of CHRIST.

Society accomplishes certain transformations as civilisation goes on, and good comes even out of what is evil. Revolutions in themselves wicked, yet are made instruments of some good

things to the Church. The quasi-annihilation of time and space by means of the rapidity of communication between one part of the world and the other parts; the general increase of a moderate amount of knowledge: all these things are no doubt in the hands of GOD, the preparations for His work, and in the fulness of His appointed time shall come the great triumph of the Church. Age after age passed before things were fully prepared for the birth of her Head; it was natural that gradually, and with a certain vicissitude of success, that success itself imperfect, the way should be prepared for her great future triumph. Then, in the harmony of peace that shall exist between all the members of the human family, shall be fulfilled, as far as can be on earth, the longings of the hearts of men after Unity. Every Christian soul ought to join his prayer with that of our LORD for the union of the baptized family. So long as the worldly spirit domineers, and keeps separate so many of the Church's children from their Mother, she passes a life of mourning. But great Babylon shall one day be cast down, and her captives shall return to the Church. O Blessed Day! when the LORD turned the captivity of Sion, we became like those that are comforted. Then was our mouth filled with joy, and our tongue with exultation. Then shall

they say among the Gentiles, "The LORD hath done great things with them." So shall it be. Let us say then now in behalf of our separated brethren, "Turn our captivity, O LORD, as the rivers in the south." We shall hear His answer. "They that sow in tears shall reap in exultation;" and the fulfilment: "On their way they went weeping, casting forth seeds. On their return they shall come with exultation, bringing their sheaves with them."

H. C.

SERMON V.

UNITY A MOTIVE OF ACTION AND A PLEDGE OF GRACE.[1]

S. John xvii. 21.

"That they all may be one . . . that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

When at three o'clock on Good Friday afternoon, Jesus died on the Cross, and the cry "It is finished," rang up through the ninefold choir of the Angel hierarchy, till its last vibration died before the throne of God, there was something finished, and something unfinished still. Finished indeed was the great work which He the Incarnate had come down from heaven to accomplish; finished was all which patriarchs

[1] To guard against possible misconception, it may be right to observe, that unity is spoken of throughout this Sermon, not in the dogmatic sense of the Nicene Creed, which lies beyond the Author's present scope, but in the sense of an actual Re-union of the separated portions of Christendom in one faith and one visible fold.

had longed for and prophets had foretold; finished was the life of self-sacrifice, the passion of agony, the death of blood,—the debt was paid, the oblation accepted, justice was satisfied, for JESUS was dead. "He was offered because He willed it." Eighteen centuries have rolled by since that cry was uttered, that oblation made, yet the work of redemption is not finished now. Look now, my dear brethren, on that world which the Redeemer died to save, and tell me if the travail of His soul is satisfied, if the Divine thirst of Calvary is slaked? Of the populations of the earth, a full two-thirds lies without the utmost limits of nominal Christianity; and of the remaining third, what judgment must be given? Tested, I do not say by the counsels of perfection, or the new law of the beatitudes, but by the barest letter of the decalogue, can it claim to be Christian, except in form and name? The poems, the proverbs, the satires of heathen antiquity, find their almost literal fulfilment in the society of modern Christendom. If we wish to realize the darkest pictures left us of Rome or Athens, we need only consult the statistics of London, Paris, and Vienna. Certain forms of vice, once openly proclaimed, are now compelled to hide themselves; certain kinds of cruelty, a greater civilization has suppressed; many virtues are prac-

tised by the few, and praised by the many, which then were scarcely dreamed of. When to this we add, that Christian sentiment has thrown a tinge of poetry or romance over the higher literature of modern Europe, and has elevated the position of women, we have pretty well exhausted the visible effects of the Incarnation. The civilized world is Christian, or at least it is christened, but it is unconverted still. Now I conceive that this is not at all the result we should have been inclined to anticipate, whether from the nature of the case, or from the language of inspired prophecy. But that after the Gospel has been preached for eighteen hundred years, it should be accepted by a bare third of mankind, and produce so little effect where it is accepted, is a phenomenon which at least demands explanation. Many explanations, more or less probable, may be given; on one only, which may claim an exceptional, if not exclusive, importance, do I purpose dwelling now.

The words of our LORD's great Eucharistic intercession, four times solemnly repeated, "that they may be One," with the reason twice repeated, "that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me," point to the visible unity of this Church as the standing evidence to the truth of His revelation. The words of CHRIST fail not.

The Catholic Church is, and ever has been, One. But I am concerned here, not with dogmatic verities, but outward facts. The Church is One, but the unity of Christendom is broken. Some eight centuries ago, the Oriental communions separated themselves from the West; in the sixteenth century, the West itself became divided, when the Church of England and other religious communities renounced allegiance to the Holy See. Since that period, not to dwell here on the subdivisions of the third portion, Christendom has presented the spectacle of three great bodies at enmity with each other. The Latin Church, claiming exclusive possession of the Catholic name, and the infallible teaching of the Holy Ghost, retains more than half the Christian populations. The Eastern Communions contain almost seventy millions more, and the separated Christian bodies divide the remainder among them. I am not now saying who is right or who is wrong in the matter. Take which view you will, the fact of division is a grievous scandal and must involve somewhere grievous sin. The energies which should be expended on a common crusade against heathenism without, and corruptions within, are wasted on mutual recriminations and internecine strife. The old proverb is revived, and men say, in mockery, or in sorrow, or in contempt, as the

case may be, "See how these Christians hate one another." The heathen world, marking these divisions among those who preach to them the Gospel of JESUS, do *not* believe that GOD has sent Him. The Christian world, marking them also, mistrusts His message and rejects His law. And every portion of Christendom, whether regarded as within or without the visible fold of the Church, loses many elements of strength. An ingenious critic,[1] who occupies a position external to all the principal Christian bodies, has traced in the three friends of Job, their prophetic prototypes. In the one who relies chiefly on authority, he recognizes the clear dogmatic utterance of the Roman Church; in him who appeals to antiquity, the Oriental claims to an unbroken tradition of doctrine and ritual from the Apostolic age; while the third, who bases his arguments on human reason, is taken to symbolize the Protestant spirit both within and without the English Church.

Without at all pledging myself to the writer's theory, still less to the deduction he has drawn from it, I certainly think he has indicated with sufficient correctness, the three main tendencies of different portions of Christendom. None will deny that Rome speaks "as one having autho-

[1] See an Irvingite pamphlet on the Book of Job.

rity," but it may be said, that the very consciousness of that authority, is apt to make her needlessly impatient of traditional restraints, and somewhat intolerant of the legitimate rights of the human intellect. Oriental conservatism is notorious, and while valuable in many ways, is carried out with a rigour and a minuteness, which seems almost to ignore the many requirements of time and circumstance, and the abiding presence of the Holy Ghost. It is the special boast of those who call themselves Protestants, to receive no doctrine which is not contained in the Scriptures as interpreted by themselves; while an influential section of them in England and Germany, put the Scriptures also into the crucible, and will accept no revelation which is more than the echo of what reason had surmised if it could not prove. "Christianity is old as the creation," is the watchword of their creed. The Anglican Church may have little sympathy with such views, but in her present separated position, she is almost powerless to control or correct them.

It is obvious then to mark certain benefits which would accrue from Re-union to the different parts of the Christian body. Anglicanism, without losing its national character, or its heritage of independent thought, would acquire fresh strength for its supernatural mission in

teaching the complete Christian dogma, and ministering in their fulness the sacraments of grace. The Oriental Churches, while still clinging to their time-honoured traditions, would learn to temper the rigidity of a somewhat antiquarian spirit, by a due regard for altered circumstances, and the progress of the human mind. The Roman Church, without sacrificing one iota of her rightful authority, would be able to enlist in her service, instead of seeming to discredit them, all the intellectual energies of the age, and once more place herself, as in days gone by, in the vanguard of advancing civilization. The triumphs of such an united Christendom, realizing the visions of Isaiah and Ezekiel, concentrating its whole moral power on internal sanctification and active aggression on the outlying Pagan world, instead of frittering it away on suicidal conflicts, who can forecast, who shall dare to limit? The words of an old prophecy rise unbidden to our lips, and we seem already to see in anticipation, the knowledge of the LORD covering the earth as the waters cover the sea.

But I purpose not dwelling here on the possibilities of a glorious future; it is a simple and more practical task, to point out present needs, and suggest the duties they involve. The present is ours, the future rests with GOD. Let us

not throw away a great opportunity and forfeit the blessings His mercy had designed to give. No one who looks upon the face of Christian society in the present day, can doubt that it is deeply penetrated by a sorrowful sense of weakness and isolation, a yearning, perhaps half unconscious, for closer sympathy of faith and love. In the Latin Church, this feeling has expressed itself in the societies organized to pray for the restoration, both of Eastern and Western separatists to her fold, as well as in the writings of some of her greatest divines.[1] Those best acquainted with the Russian Church, tell us, that a similar desire is springing up there also, whilst the numerous individual conversions to the Roman Communion, which have taken place in Russia for some years past, are a further indication of dissatisfaction with the present state of things. In England, aspirations, long secretly cherished, for re-union with East and West, have lately found open expression in the Convocation of Canterbury. Such strange phenomena as the Irvingite community, or the Evangelical Alliance, are in reality confessions of the same great want. And the rapid strides of modern science, with its seeming antagonism to revelation, are another imperative call upon

[1] See a remarkable passage in Döllinger's recent work, "The Church and the Churches." Pp. 16—18.

us to marshal our forces and ascertain our true position, that the trumpet may give no uncertain sound, when it summons us to the battle of Armageddon.

It would be difficult indeed, to calculate the effects of disunion in fostering scepticism or unbelief. Doubtless the Psalmist's words are ever verified. "Them that are meek He shall guide in judgment, and such as are gentle them shall He learn His way." There is a road of obedience and simplicity, wherein "the way-farers, though fools, shall not err." But for the many who have no real desire to be guided, who find the Christian doctrine cut across some cherished theory, or the strictness of the Christian law interfere with some darling inclination; for these, and such as these, the multiplicity of teachers, the discordance of beliefs affords an excuse, though not a justification, for their rejection of all alike. It is a plausible course to stand aloof from contending theologians, and weigh with impartial contempt, the merits of conflicting creeds. Here at least I am painting no fanciful picture, but recording an experience which many of you will recognize as your own. And as one result of this, nobody who is even moderately acquainted with the religious condition of England, can doubt that among our educated, or self-educated classes, scepticism is

advancing with swift though noiseless tide. How many of the youth of our universities, of our lawyers, men of business, medical students, have any definite belief in Christianity? How many profess with Strauss, to accept only its "moral contents," and do in fact reconstruct even that portion of the Gospel on more or less arbitrary principles? How many of those we meet in the daily intercourse of society, are in any sense believers? I said just now, that the moral state of Greece and Rome, found its parallel in the capitals of modern Christendom. Has not our religious state too, come to something very like that ascribed by the infidel historian to the days of the later empire, when all creeds were for the philosopher equally false, for the magistrate equally useful, for the populace equally true? Certain recent publications in this country, which have attracted public notice and created an excitement in the theological world, are chiefly important as straws that show which way the stream is flowing; they do not constitute so much as indicate a fact, and are a kind of touchstone by which the thoughts of many hearts are revealed. But they also testify to a growing need, the more deeply felt that it is neither recognized nor confessed.

It is daily becoming clearer, that between Catholicism and infidelity, there is no intellec-

tual standing ground, and as time goes on, men will be compelled to make their election—nay, they are silently doing so already—between the opposing standards of rationalism and the Church. Were Christendom at unity with itself, that choice would be comparatively easy; as it is, how many, who should be with us are against us, born as they are into an atmosphere where all lights are distorted, and taught to suspect, as a treacherous bondage, that Truth which alone could make them free. The young, the brave, the impetuous, those who in other days had been among the foremost champions, the noblest martyrs of the faith, will have nothing to say to a religion which has neither the courage to assert its principles, nor the consistency to command respect. They are arrayed in all the ardour of their enthusiasm and strength of their youth, in the armies of the alien. Missions paralyzed, faith failing, morality shedding its Christian elements, charity waxing cold—such, my dear brethren, are some, and only some, of the lamentable fruits of that chronic disunion, which, since it has now lasted several centuries, we have come to regard as the normal state of Christendom; and yet the dogmatic question which separated East and West, is now regarded by theologians on both sides as a distinction without a difference; and a great

Roman Catholic authority has lately expressed his conviction that four-fifths of Protestant objections to his Church, are mere logomachies and misunderstandings, which would at once succumb to a real and honest conviction on both sides, that unity, not division, was the will of God. To all who have attained that conviction, and I trust they are not a few, I would offer two or three simple suggestions, as to the practical duties incumbent on them; for let none suppose they are too insignificant to do any service to the cause. God does not need, but He accepts His creatures' aid; the greatest can add nothing to Him, but He demands the ministry of the least. To preach, or write, or controvert, is the calling of the few; to act, is the privilege of the many; and ways of acting are not far to seek. Let me remind you of some of them.

The first might seem almost too obvious to mention, but that what is familiar we are for that very reason apt to forget. I mean prayer. We do not sufficiently realize that great law of intercession by virtue of which all Christians are united in the heritage of a "royal priesthood." We scarcely dare to believe, what Scripture throughout implies, that God has been pleased to accord to His children's prayers, a power over His Own Divine Will, and made them,

so to say, the law of His Providence, the measure of His compassion, the illimitable limit of His love. Into the metaphysical difficulties connected with the subject, I shall not enter here. As with the old controversy about free-will and predestination, no adequate solution is possible to our limited faculties. It is enough for us to know, that GOD heareth prayer, though it be also true, that His eternal purpose cannot change. And while this applies pre-eminently to the Holy Sacrifice, and the intercession of the Saints in light, it also applies in its measure to the cry of the humblest of His children. Prayer is a power which all possess,—a duty which none may inculpably neglect. If we would all resolve to spend but a minute every day, in saying one OUR FATHER for the Unity of Christendom, the very act would be a pledge of deepening sympathy, as well as a direct means towards gaining our end. All who forget to pray for Unity must share, in GOD's sight, the responsibility for our divided state.

Another method open to all of us towards attaining the same object, is to cultivate in ourselves the spirit, not of division, but of sympathy, to search rather for points of agreement, than of difference, and not indeed to slur over principles—that can never do any good—but to seek to explain seeming difficulties, instead of

exaggerating them, and to be very careful not to raise mere verbal questions into matters of trivial import. If four-fifths of the controversies between the Roman Church and her opponents are mere "logomachies," four-fifths of them would be at once dissipated by a little friendly and candid discussion. I have referred to the words of a great Catholic divine of Germany; let me add a few words from a sermon lately delivered at Oxford, by an English divine, whose opinions in many points, I should be unable to endorse, but who here at least well deserves attention. "Let us never impute to our opponents, whether Church, sects, or individuals, intentions which they themselves disclaim, nor fasten upon them opprobrious names which they themselves repudiate; let us never attack any one without first making out deliberately, carefully, seriously, all the points wherein we agree; and then, and not till then, stating the points wherein we disagree, and stating these also to ourselves no less deliberately, carefully, and seriously, lest after all, there be perchance no disagreement at all, or not that which we thought there was."[1] The Procession of the Holy Ghost, the Primacy of Peter, Transubstantiation, Purgatory, the worship of Saints, how

[1] "Human Corruption," a Sermon preached before the University of Oxford, by A. P. Stanley, D.D. 1863. Pp. 18, 19.

long, were such principles acted on, would these doctrines remain elements of disunion, instead of being instruments of peace?

And if this be true in dealing with the subject-matter of controversy, in dealing with persons who differ from us, the line of duty is clearer still. Many differences are fanciful or verbal; but there are also real differences of principle which it would be wrong to dissemble, and which cannot be reconciled merely by being ignored. But it is always a duty in the absence of direct proof to the contrary (which we can very seldom have) to assume the personal good faith of opponents, and so treat them accordingly. This is quite consistent with availing ourselves of any suitable opportunities that offer for pointing out their errors. Even in the case of those who have unhappily lost their faith in revelation altogether, gentleness and consideration will be found more effective as well as more congruous than harshness. The old fable of the sun and wind comes in here. It is easier to win than to convict. You will say, perhaps, my brethren, that this too is a trifling suggestion, —too much a matter of course to be worth insisting on. But it is not so. If it is generally admitted in words, it is far more often forgotten in practice. How commonly, for instance, do we see Catholics cold, constrained and unreal

in the presence of Protestants; how constantly do Protestants behave in Catholic society as though they had fallen among their natural enemies and must be on their guard. How frequently do Anglicans, professing the highest views, shrink from friendly intercourse with members of the Church of Rome, as though a kind of armed neutrality were their safest attitude. Now all this, remember, is not only inconsistent with a desire for Union, but has a direct tendency to perpetuate dissension. We know how common it is in ordinary life for us to take up a prejudice against persons we only know by hearsay, which melts at once, like the morning dew, at the first glance of their eye or tone of their voice, if we chance to meet them. So too are many religious prejudices and antipathies which had their life in mutual ignorance or distrust, dispelled at once by personal intercourse. An Italian Priest has told me how totally different had been his notion of English religion before and after his visiting this country. And we know how Continental travel enlarges the sympathies in this as in other ways.

Here then I have suggested three methods of promoting the cause of Re-union which are open to every one of us: first, by praying for it; secondly, by cherishing a spirit of candour

and large-hearted sympathy in dealing with controverted doctrines while adhering strictly to principle; thirdly, by seizing rather than avoiding opportunities of personal contact with those of different sentiments or a different Communion from our own. And I dwell the more strongly on this third point, because I am sure you would often be quite surprised to find how much you have in common in your deepest feelings and convictions with persons seeming at first sight most widely removed from your religious sympathies. This circumstance alone would show how many of our loudly proclaimed differences are in reality superficial, how thoroughly Catholic in their inner belief are numbers, who fancy it is a duty to call themselves staunch Protestants, while in fact the false and negative side of their theology exercises not the slightest influence on their spiritual life. All error is a negation of truth, and generally, in the most heretical sects or schools, religious people live on those portions of truth which they rightly retain, not on the denials of what they have wrongly rejected. They suffer of course as holding part instead of the whole, but what is needed is not so much to convict them of error as to lead them to supply the missing articles of their imperfect creed. A man who really and heartily believes in the Incarnation

cannot be very far from acknowledging the Real Presence, and, but for intervening prejudices of some kind, would accept it as soon as it was put before him. Indeed it is hardly too much to say that when once the mind has embraced that great and central doctrine of the Faith, it has embraced dynamically the whole range of Christian doctrine; but, in our present divided state, a thousand counter influences too often come in to disturb its proper action, and mar the harmony of belief. And hence the common spectacle, which to contemporaries of S. Athanasius or S. Gregory would have been equally strange and incomprehensible, of Christians combining a fervent devotion to our LORD with an aversion to His Church and a contempt or rejection of His gifts.

There is one objection to all that has been said which is often felt where it is not put into words, and which it may be well to notice briefly here. In the estimation of many religious people, and still more of those who are not religious, the whole scheme is at best quixotic. There is nothing, they would tell us, in the analogy of nature to suggest that Unity once broken can ever be restored: all history points the other way; as well might we expect to see the lion and the lamb lie down together as to see the day when Catholic and Protestant, Greek,

Anglican, and Roman, will cease to be watch-words of ecclesiastical strife; there may be a truce in the "battle of the Churches," but it is idle to look for Union or lasting peace. Now it would be quite sufficient to reply to such reasoners by pointing to our LORD's most solemn words, or the prophetic descriptions of the future glories of the Church. It cannot be idle to labour for what His Spirit has predicted, it cannot be dutiful to acquiesce in what He condemns. But I prefer to meet the objectors on their own ground. Their argument is not simply unscriptural, it is unphilosophical also. Whatever may be the predestined future of Christendom, to suppose that all things will continue as they have done is to read experience backwards. We may not be able to interpret accurately the signs of the times, but we can tell at least that they point to change. "The old order yieldeth, giving place to new." Look back on the last fifty years of European history. Who deemed at the beginning of the century that the Roman Church would ever win back her present position in society and the world of thought? Who anticipated thirty years ago the recent developements of Anglicanism? When High Church and Low Church factions were disputing over Wesley's grave, who marked the shadow as of a man's hand rising out of the sea, the

first threatenings of that rationalistic movement which should come upon both of them, and which neither is found equal to cope with? And if the last half century has been prolific in surprise who shall say what the next may bring forth? It is clear already that the Italian Revolution must have something more than a simply political significance. German Protestantism is held in solution; in England the contest between faith and unbelief grows daily more imminent, and the old theological war-cries become meaningless or obsolete. Everywhere there is an upheaving of the ground, a breaking up of the foundations, a fearful looking for of judgments yet to come. Men say that a prophet is needed, for this age is out of joint. The wind, the fire, and the earthquake may have their work to accomplish, but shall we not also listen for the whispers of the still small voice? At such a time it is most natural and fitting to come forward to speak words of peace, to bid men strive and pray for unity. "O pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee. For my brethren and companions' sakes I will wish thee prosperity. Yea, because of the house of the LORD our GOD, I will seek to do thee good."

And now, brethren, if you feel the truth of what has been said, let me entreat you at once

to act upon it. Do not let the vision of Unity pass into a mere waking dream. Resolve never to let a day pass without at least saying some short prayer—if possible, before the altar—for this intention. Never let slip an opportunity of promoting the same end by the interchange of kindly thoughts and deeds, and by cherishing in yourselves that temper of large-hearted considerate sympathy, and of quiet practical enthusiasm, which is the surest augury of success. These things may seem to you trivial, but there is a woe pronounced on those who despise the day of small things. "Take ye the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines; for our vines have tender grapes." By little things our work is made or marred. There are those of course who are called to a more conspicuous post, and who can use their power or influence, whatever it be, in a more public promotion of the same object. But even they should be careful not to neglect these humbler methods of aiding the cause for which they are also labouring in the pulpit, or with the pen, or amid the social throng. On their special opportunities and duties I have not dwelt, not because I undervalue them, but because I have wished to say what might have a direct application to the case of all. Those who have larger responsibilities will not the less be able to apply it for them-

selves. Let us only remember that as the object is practical so also must be the means of obtaining it. God makes His blessings dependent on our co-operation, though it is true, as S. Augustine says, that in rewarding our merits He crowns His own gifts.

To conclude. Let me recall once more to your memory the Redeemer's last Intercession, His Dying Thirst. That prayer for Unity formed part of the Canon of the first Mass in the upper chamber at Jerusalem. It still finds place in the Roman Missal, in the Greek Liturgy, in the Anglican Communion Office. But still the "multiplicity of Churches" is the standing scandal of Christendom. And therefore faith is failing, and the love of many has waxed cold. Therefore the thirst of Calvary is still unsatisfied, because we will not make one good honest effort to forget our jealousies, to explain our differences, to unlearn our errors, to subdue our pride, as an act of reparation to the Sacred Heart which, for us men and for our salvation, was tortured in the Garden, and pierced on the bleeding Cross.

H. N. O.

SERMON VI.

THE BLESSING OF UNITY.

PSALM L. 5.

"GATHER MY SAINTS TOGETHER UNTO ME: THOSE THAT HAVE MADE A COVENANT WITH ME WITH SACRIFICE."

IN these few words the Psalmist sums up the mystery of Christian union, and solves the hard question of the mode of restoring it, now that for our sins it is broken for a time. The words appeal to the truths maintained, sometimes too exclusively, by opposite schools of thought, as well that which dwells most on inward holiness as constituting true membership of CHRIST'S Body, as the larger one which points to outward fellowship of belief and practice, as the surer mark of Catholic brotherhood. The summons is sent forth far and wide, to gather the guests for the King's banquet, to convoke the soldiers for the King's army. To all ends

of the earth, from where the lonely missionary toils in the frozen wastes of Kamtschatka, to the sunny isles of the Pacific Ocean; from Japan and Corea, rich with the blood of Martyrs, to Paraguay and Brazil; to all classes and ages, from kings and prelates, scholars and statesmen, down to those whose only learning is the cross of suffering, whose only wealth is their Master's poverty, the message of glad tidings comes. There is no distinction made of race, or station, or age, for GOD does not judge as man does, but yet there are two limits laid down, two conditions that must needs be fulfilled. He must have the choice of the flock. Maimed or blemished offerings may not be given to Him, and therefore He says, "Gather My Saints." But the earth is the LORD'S and all that is therein. Every good gift, every perfect gift, be it of the soul or body, holiness or strength, wisdom or activity, is from above, and cometh down from the FATHER of lights. Who then shall say where His hidden saints may be? who shall say how much or how little is assigned to them on whom the Name of CHRIST has not been called, or who have heard that Name only in the strife of tongues? None can fully probe so deep a mystery, but all can note the clear practical sign of full communion. The true children are they who

sit at the table of the kingdom; who have made a covenant with their LORD with sacrifice. As there is but one Sacrifice, of which all others were but signs, we can be at no loss to interpret this saying. It excludes all from present enjoyment, though not from future hope, to whom that Sacrifice is entirely strange, or who have not made it the seal of their covenant. The adorable Sacrament of the altar, in its double character of Oblation and Food, in its mystic power of uniting us with our Redeemer's Person, is at once the means of the continued life of the Church and the pledge of the future reunion of her members. The Psalmist does not speak, as sectaries do in our day, of merely trusting in the finished work of another, even though that other be the SAVIOUR of mankind. He implies active co-operation in the work as a test of saintliness; describes the saints as those who have themselves made a covenant with GOD. Not merely such a covenant as that of Joshua, when he vowed service on his own part and that of his house, though this too must enter in, but a covenant with sacrifice. It is not enough that there should be a reverent trust in the death of the LORD, nor yet that a solemn rite should be celebrated in memory of His last meal with His Apostles. It is only the Sacrifice which completes the covenant; only

the mystical offering in the blessed Eucharist, so strangely and yet so perfectly one with the Oblation on the Cross, which constitutes the title of the members of CHRIST's Body to union with their Head, and to a share in the benefits of His perpetual presentation of Himself in heaven as the propitiation for our sins. Under various rites, in divers tongues, amidst men of unlike race and habits, the same offering is perpetually made; and where it is unceasingly presented, there is a hidden unity, soon, let us pray, to become visible and firm. As all Christian doctrine circles round the central truth of the Incarnation, and as all theological systems, which adopt another centre, invariably fall, so all Christian unity springs from the Eucharistic presence of CHRIST; and therefore says the Apostle, "For we being many are one bread and one body, for we are all partakers of that One Bread." He does not say, we are one body, because we have one common ceremonial, or because we have one particular organization, or one visible chief, but because we eat of that One Bread; and therefore the Church says, "I will wash my hands in innocency, so will I compass Thine altar, O LORD;" thus answering His call, when He summons His saints that make covenant with Him with sacrifice. In other matters, there may be prominent differ-

ences. The mode of prayer, the temper of mind, cultivated by one portion of the Church, may be different from that fostered by another; the aspect of certain articles of the common faith may be unlike in distant regions. Here may be pliability and variety, there fixity and unchangingness. But there cannot be two sacrifices, two breads, two sources of life. Those born of the same womb and fed from the same breast, are brothers, however separation and distance, passion and misunderstanding, may have divided them. They cannot deny their blood, though they may renounce all intercourse, and speak of one another with a bitterness which they would never show to aliens. The sense of kinship is often thus strangely perverted, and never more strangely, more piteously, than in the controversial struggles of the divided Church. If we look only to the surface of things, there would be little hope of happier times being in store for us, even if we have not quite lost all hope in the power of our Master's prayer, when He asked that His disciples might be one. The chiefs of the sundered portion of Christendom are still hurling defiance at one another; the masses are still indifferent; the open champions of unity are few, and powerless, and scattered.

Yet there are not wanting tokens to the eye

of faith, tokens like in their kind, if not in their degree, to those which preceded the coming of the LORD. Then the earth was prepared for conquest by the wide influence of Roman law and Greek letters, which so marvellously bound the lands from Britain to Persia, from the Elbe to the Nile, in one great homogeneous realm. Now, the barriers set up between nation and nation are breaking down before a slower, more subtil, but not less powerful influence. Facility of locomotion, opportunity of intercourse, commercial barter and literary communion are again fusing the peoples into one, and national hatred and local jealousies are growing obviously fainter day by day. Is it too much to hold that GOD is preparing the way for another change, as marvellous in its way as that which swept over the Roman Empire? Once more: Before the Coming of CHRIST our LORD, the whole world was hushed in anticipation. Vague rumours and prophecies of the near approach of a mighty King and Deliverer resounded, not merely in the synagogues of Judæa, but in the shrines of heathen gods, in the schools of Gentile philosophers. So too now men's hearts are stirred with a craving for unity, such as was strange to almost all the past ages. Political necessity often prompted mutual advances between East and West, but it was plain that the

heart of neither was in the work, and nothing has hitherto come of them save mutual reproaches and increased bitterness of feeling.

We, in England, were content with arrogant self-laudation, and contemptuous depreciation of all that was not ours. We have now learnt at least a humbler way of speaking touching ourselves, a more deferential and sympathizing estimate of others. From the least expected quarter the same thought is manifested. Russia has spoken, and Greece; America has sent her voice in reply, and hopeful sounds have been heard in France and Italy. Even Protestantism itself, the symbol of strife and disorder, cannot keep entirely aloof from the common sentiment. The Evangelical Alliance has its value in showing that the narrow limits of a sect are not wide enough for the sympathies of its members, and that fellowship with others, whom the founders of each sect would have banned, is a primary need of spiritual life. The singular position of our Church, unexampled in all time, points it out as a fitting instrument—it may be, the chosen instrument—of that reunion for which all are longing. The more pious and reverent minds of Protestantism turn to her with half-repressed longing, a longing which her elder and more august sisters do not inspire.

If Protestants are, as a body, to be led back

into the fold, there is, humanly speaking, no other passage for them than through her gates. Her very weaknesses and shortcomings, her very hesitancies and compromises seem as though meant to draw on those babes in faith who would turn away from the strong meat of full and definite statement on all questions of belief. She is pledged to no quarrel with the East, no impassable gulf divides her from the West. Still the Catholic Creeds resound in her temples, still the threefold hierarchy ministers at her altars, still the One Bread is broken, the One Sacrifice presented. She fell away, as every Church has done at one time or another. She has risen again and girded herself to her work as no sect has ever yet done. By her renewed life, by her clearer voice, by her redoubled energies, she has morally proved her Apostolic claims even to those who cavil at them. Even those who are compelled by the exigence of a narrow theory to admit but one possible form of true Christianity cannot explain the paradox to their own satisfaction, cannot help attaching a degree of interest to every movement within her pale which they never accord to the strivings of Protestantism.

Why should not Switzerland or Prussia, Denmark or Holland excite the same feeling, if it be merely a question between a lawful ruler

and revolted subjects? There is little doubt that they would, as little as that the tokens we see are those of the irresistible yearnings of a sister over her own flesh and blood. It is not by petty trafficking in single converts, who seldom weaken the community which they leave or adorn that which they join, that the great problem of the age is to be solved. It was not thus that Spain passed from Arianism to Catholicity, or that Bohemia abandoned Gnosticism. If the Church can no longer take whole nations in the net of Peter, it must be because the net has been unwisely reduced in size by unskilful fishers. A new dogma in one corner, a new cultus in another, a fresh claim in a third, dangerously lessen the available space, and when the net is cast it cannot compass the prey. Instead of the miraculous draught, only a few tiny fishes are the result of lengthened toil, and are not only unequal to the hopes, but insufficient for the needs of the fishermen. For it is plain that the time is fast coming when nothing but unlimited resources will enable Christendom to resist the attacks of the powers of evil. We shall want all the help that Greece and Rome can give us, and they in their turn cannot dispense with us. The sense of a common necessity may draw those together who are not yet joined by that of a common duty,

and the petty dissonances of a jarring household will be hushed amidst the din of battle against the general foe. But it will not do to wait until the enemy is upon us in order to unite our divided forces. Mutual advances, mutual concessions, above all, mutual prayers must lay the foundation of a sure alliance. Gathered before the altars of God, making covenant with Him with sacrifice, intreating His aid and guidance, we shall most fitly begin the work. Not praying that our own will may be done, that Unity may be brought about in some one given way, that the influence and power of some one Communion may be predominant, but leaving the issues in His Hand, Who hath said to His Church: "Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. As I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on thee, as a bride doeth. For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away."

R. F. L.

SERMON VII.

RE-UNION OUR NEED AND OUR DESIRE.

S. John xvii. 20, 21.

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their Word; that they all may be One; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be One in Us: that the World may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

Believing as we do, that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works," we may be allowed, nevertheless, without presumption, to regard with a special and a worshipful devotion, the chapter of S. John's Gospel, of which these words form a part. As the full expression of the sacred Heart's desire, the divinely-recorded utterance of the inmost yearning of the Redeemer's Soul, when already

the agony of the garden was foreshadowed upon Him, and the satisfaction of His burning love upon the cross was at last at hand—the prayer itself, by its very nature, awakens into sympathy with JESUS the heart that ponders it, and illumines with gleams of hope the soul that devoutly dwells upon its words. It is clearly true of all Scripture, but more especially of this wonderful chapter, that it is many-sided, and so may be regarded in many different aspects. We are led, according to the calls of our manifold and ever changing needs, to draw different truths at different times, under the guidance of GOD'S Spirit, from the same passage of His never changing Word. Different truths, I say, but not contradictory or inconsistent, or they would not be truths at all; rather different *aspects* of the same only truth as seen amid the varying lights and shadows through which in this our transitory state we alone can gaze upon it.

There is one great want which is painfully felt in these our times, and especially in our own land, and for which, if I mistake not, these words of our Divine Redeemer supply the remedy—I mean our want of *unity*. It is a want however which is felt in many different ways, for we are not even one in the acknowledgment of our need. Some few indeed there are, who

will not admit the need at all; they have come to glory in their weakness and their shame, to rejoice in the freedom from restraint which comes of doubt as to the rightfulness of the authority which once restrained, to chafe at and resist the wise and loving rules, whether of faith or practice, which marked out for their forefathers the *one* faith which they should hold, and the *one* path which they should tread. But, however, latterly, such a spirit may have spread, it may yet be hoped that among men of religious mind, and of such only I am speaking now, there is still so general a conviction, that the Truth must needs be *One,* as to leave to the comparatively few, the miserable peculiarity of advocating private speculation, and the adoption of private opinion, as against the common tenure of the Faith of Pentecost, witnessed by the unbroken tradition of eighteen centuries of Christianity. Yet some such there are; some such there have ever been and will ever be to the end. There must needs be such, an Apostle has told us, for a reason which holds good as on the day when he wrote it to his erring brethren at Corinth. "When ye come together in the Church, I hear that there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest

among you." But among men of religious mind and religious life, there is doubtless a very general sense of "the great dangers we are in from our unhappy divisions."[1] We are constrained at last to confess, that there is wanting such a free circulation of the life-blood of the One Body, as would carry the joyousness of health and strength into its every member; or if there must needs be sorrow, would soften, and sweeten, and lighten it by making it common to all. It is the selfish joy, unshared by another, that poisons the soul, and sows the seeds of bitter grief to come; it is the lonely sorrow, which calls forth no tear of sympathy, that crushes and cannot be borne. And again, what ground for doubt as to the true faith is there in the divisions of those who profess to hold it? How shall the wayfaring man now find the way of holiness where alone the redeemed walk? How, as the hour of death draws on, shall the learned, diligent, but baffled speculator, know Whom he has believed? How shall *any* attain to the blessed certainty of faith? How, but by bringing every thought into captivity, by the learned meeting the unlearned on one common level, and both humbling themselves here to the obedience of the One Faith, that hereafter they may be together exalted?

[1] "Prayer for Unity," in the Accession Service.

Our whole popular religion seems in danger of becoming a mere matter of opinion, a subject of free discussion, on which every man has a right to his own view, the possession of which is regarded by many as the mark of a liberal mind. In short, *authority* must be superseded by *private judgment;* —such is the cry of the day. Not that it is so, or while the world lasts, can ever be so. The great masses of men are, by GOD'S providence so situated, that no opportunity of theological study is, or can be, theirs. And others of a higher class in education and worldly intelligence, are scarcely their superiors in the knowledge of things divine. To this very general ignorance must be added its inevitable fruit—the blindest and most unreasoning prejudice. Practically, therefore, the exercise of private judgment amounts to very little; with many it comes only to this—they will retain their unreasoning conviction that whatever savours of authority in things divine, that any claim, especially on the part of the Church to teach with authority, must be resisted, as contrary to the principles of the Reformation, as opposed to the freedom which is the birthright of every Englishman, which was won for them by martyrs at the stake—freedom to believe or disbelieve what they please, provided only they can prove to their own satisfaction that their

belief or unbelief rests upon the Word of God as its basis. This implies necessarily no exercise of judgment, no balancing of evidence, no conclusions arrived at by sound and careful reasoning on the part of him who thus believes. It implies neither the exercise of private judgment, nor yet freedom from external authority, for such persons too commonly allow prejudice to supersede their judgment, while they are ever the blindest followers of blind or designing guides.

Again, there is a very general sense of failure depressing the more thoughtful of religious minds. The Cross has not its triumphs as of old. We are always *just going* to do some great work, to deal with the masses of our large towns, to meet more effectually their manifold spiritual necessities; more especially London remains as a heavy burden of responsibility, grievous to be borne—London with its three millions of souls still left to the care of its one Bishop. Who indeed is sufficient for these things? Then there are our manufacturing populations, and our agricultural poor—widely different in character, but one in deep spiritual need; buried too often in ignorance and indifference, or the blind and willing victims of heresy and schism. And if we look abroad, Africa demands Christianity at our hands, as a tardy recompense for

our own un-Christian traffic with her children in days gone by. India, after 150 years of British rule, *heathen* India still, urges the prior claim of a million and a half of heathens, as being fellow subjects with ourselves of our own Christian Queen. Great indeed have been the efforts lately made to answer these many calls; the rapid increase in the Colonial Episcopate is itself matter for thankfulness and ground for hope; yet after all, we are but putting our hand to the plough while yet perchance the even-tide of our working-day is drawing on; we are but *beginning*, and it is the eleventh hour. Earnest minds feel that there is somewhere an element of weakness; faith and hope seem to worldly men to be missing their object, and losing a reward which has never been more than a delusion and a dream. Distracted and divided at home, our Missionary efforts do but reproduce in an aggravated form our own divisions, contentions, and inherent weakness on a foreign soil.

Many seek to blind their eyes to the true state of things. A plain statement of the truth is to them a proof of want of faith in such as venture to make it. They would seek to conceal our unhappy divisions beneath a tacit and polite agreement to differ; while the manifold evils arising from them, if admitted as evils at all,

give rise only to some pious expression of resignation, as if forsooth this was our inevitable portion in this transitory state. But surely, beloved, there can be no safety in blinding our eyes to the danger. It is most salutary, even though it be painful, to be compelled to look the danger in the face, and to realize the most unwelcome truths. "He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue."

Let us ever turn to the prayer of our Divine Redeemer in behalf of all who should believe on Him—that they all might be One—and mark well the doctrine, the reproof, the correction, the instruction in righteousness, which a divided and distracted Christendom may find in its words of power. And first as to the reality of the evil; for as we have seen, some glory in the absence of Unity as a benefit and a blessing,—a proof of sincerity and freedom. The very terms of this prayer forbid the thought that any such condition of disagreement and freedom to disbelieve, can possibly be consistent with the desire of the Sacred Heart. Again, the very fact of this expression of the desire having been given us—a revelation of that which now goes on unceasingly before the Throne of GOD—is in itself a most solemn call to raise our own desires into closest harmony with it, and to hasten its ful-

filment by untiring efforts, as well as to unite ourselves in unceasing prayer with the unchanged desire of the Ever-living Intercessor. If there is "one LORD," so must there be "one Faith." If we reject the Unity of Faith, and glory in the diversity of creeds, the inconsistency must soon be felt, of attempting to combine such professions with a belief in the Person of the Incarnate, and an allegiance to His Word and Will.

We have glanced at the manifold difficulties which beset the Church's work at home springing from the want of Unity. Let it not, however, be imagined that the mere ingathering of our own separatists into the bosom of the English Church is the Unity for which we pray. England is not the world, nor is her Church the Mother and Mistress of all Churches. We must not contract our desires to this mere attainment of a local national benefit. When JESUS prayed for *all* who should believe on Him through the word of His Apostles, He included the millions of the East equally with ourselves—the children of S. Thomas and S. James no less than of S. Peter and S. Paul.

Again, we must allow none of the prejudices of education, the bitter recollections of party strife, the unhealed wounds of national religious conflicts, to awaken in us a desire for the ex-

clusion of *any* Church or people from the One Fold of the One Shepherd. Our own national instincts might lead us to remind the Roman Catholic that England, even in her Catholicity, can never become Italian, nor French, nor Spanish; that her very religion bears the stamp of her greatness, her independence, and her power; and that in the Councils of the One Church of the future for which we pray so fervently this must always be borne in mind. But we must not forget that the Italian has *his* religious instincts, as strong, if not far stronger than our own; and that whenever there is a visibly united Christendom once more we must be content, as one amongst many, to merge what is peculiar in what is common, and with loving sacrifice of local or national prejudice, to receive with ready obedience, the Decrees of the Reunited Church as the expression of a Voice unerring and Divine. Perhaps, however, before our prayers are answered, and the Church again is visibly One, the Heavenly Ruler of the kingdoms of this world may have lowered us in the scale of nations, that, by the humiliation of too proud a people, the way might be paved for the ultimate triumph of the Church, when all shall have become the kingdoms of our LORD, and of His CHRIST. But of this we may feel sure that the

Reunion of the great Catholic Communions into which Christendom is divided must precede the ingathering of the innumerable separatists from each into the fellowship of the One Body. It has pleased GOD that the *Unity* of His Church should be to old Christian lands, no less than to the heathen, the witness that Her Incarnate Head came out from GOD, and so that the authority with which she is invested is eternal and Divine. For lack of such a witness schism and heresy have become rife. The various schisms have separated again and again after their first severance from the Body. Heresy, ever changing, ever new, tends as to a natural and inevitable end to Deism. The wildest forms of misbelief, the inventions of disordered imaginations, find willing devotees ready to receive them; and however hideous or revolting, however shallow and absurd in its manifestations, men "go wondering after the Beast." Where then does our hope lie but in the restoration of that witness which we need, in the Reunion of the Church who alone in her Unity can witness effectually to the Truth? When the voice of authority again is heard, too clear, too certain to be mistaken, when the One Church speaks once more in the midst of the tumult, and the din, and the strife of words, with an authority unmistakeably Divine, then, and not till then,

will the scattered sheep hear and know the Shepherd's Voice, and as there is One Shepherd, so again will there be One Fold.

And if this be so in the case of lands where Christian Churches have grown old even to decay, even still more apparent is the need of such a witness to the vast populations of heathendom. What we need is a united witness borne by all Christian people to the truths which they hold in common. We find instead miserable jealousies and disagreements amongst the representatives of rival societies as to the peculiar form of Christianity with which some particular heathen people shall be indoctrinated. Madagascar, for instance, presents itself as a missionary field. "It shall have the pure Gospel," says one—meaning the Gospel without a Bishop. "It shall have the Church in her integrity," cries another, who means the Church governed and represented by a Bishop. Both claim to be preachers of the same Crucified Redeemer, and are equally zealous in the service of the same LORD. It is evident how much zeal is wasted in the civil war between the societies at home before the work abroad begins, and when it does begin how perplexing the position in which the native is placed who is called upon to decide a nice point of controversy before he has yet learned to name the Name of CHRIST.

Let all who have to teach take heed unto *themselves,* and to the doctrine. We have much to learn before we can teach with effect. Let us take well to heart the responsibilities which are laid upon us, and the failures which so far have attended their discharge. The great and marvellous revival of religious life and energy with which it has pleased GOD to bless the Church of England in these latter days has found its almost necessary exercise in missionary as well as in home work. If I have dwelt on our shortcomings—on what we have essayed to do, but have not done—it is from no lack of confidence in the ultimate issue, under GOD's blessing, of the cause we have at heart. It is *His* cause, not *ours.* We are fellow-workers with Him Who is All-powerful and All-wise. In His Own good time He will complete His Own work. Happy they who are His instruments, who have made His cause their own. All power is His on earth and in heaven, Who ever liveth *there* to make intercession for us who watch, and pray, and work, and suffer *here.* Heaven and earth even now are one in their longing for the glorious future that is at hand. Both are engaged unceasingly in preparing for the end. If the intercession above ceases not, so on earth, at the Altars of Christendom, the One Sacrifice is unceasingly pleaded—the LORD's Death shown in mystery

till He come. Ere long the desire of all hearts shall be fulfilled, and every highest and purest hope more than realized. The world's Redeemer shall see of the travail of His Soul and shall be satisfied; the work of the HOLY SPIRIT in the sanctification of the elect on earth shall be completed; the Love of the Eternal FATHER shall welcome the new creation as it reaches its predestined glory; and amid the splendours of that bright and eternal day we shall see that clearly which now we can but embrace as a vision of the far-off land—a perfected Unity with one another in GOD. Whatever the full meaning of those words—"As Thou, FATHER, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be One in Us,"—the fulness of their meaning will be apparent then in a fulness of bliss of which even the restored Unity of Christendom below would be but an earthly shadow.

"O happy, holy portion,
Refection for the blest;
True vision of true beauty,
True cure of the distrest!

"Strive, man, to win that glory;
Toil, man, to gain that light;
Send hope before to grasp it,
Till hope be lost in sight."

SERMON VIII.

VISIBLE REUNION A SPECIAL NECESSITY.

S. John xvii. 20, 21.

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one: as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

Our Lord Jesus Christ prayed that His followers might be One. He did so at the most solemn period of His earthly sojourn, the night before His Crucifixion, when He had just instituted the Holy Feast of His own Body and Blood. We must never forget that He was God as well as man, and so had present to His mind all that He was about to undergo,—the agony and bloody sweat, His trial before Caiaphas and Pontius Pilate, His rejection by His own people, the desertion of His friends, the mocking of His enemies, the buffetings and

scourgings, the crown of thorns and the Cross, the triumph of the powers of darkness, and the hiding of His FATHER's countenance; and yet He could withdraw His thoughts from these terrors, and pray that His disciples might all be One. This shows most touchingly the importance He attached to the subject of Unity. He would have His followers, however widely separated, or however unknown to each other, to be not only united in heart and affection, sympathy and good will, but to form *one visible body*; to hold the same faith, observe the same rites and sacraments, live under the same ministry, and be governed by the same laws. This is evident from the reason He gives for desiring that they all might be One, "that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." He would have their Unity to be of such a character that it might be observed by all men, and so afford to those who believed not, a proof of His Own divine mission. But for this purpose, it must be something more than a unity of spirit and love, for this can be known to few or none but themselves: and accordingly S. Paul dwells on the fact of there being one body and one baptism, as well as one spirit, one LORD, one GOD and FATHER of all, one faith and one hope to which Christians are called; and insists on the necessity of an outward manifestation of their

inward unity, requiring them to glorify God not only with one mind, but also with one mouth.

For a time the prayer of our Lord appeared to be answered. "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul," "and continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers." And when the preaching of the Gospel was no longer confined to Jerusalem, but extended even to distant lands,—they who embraced it, and were admitted by Holy Baptism to the enjoyment of its hopes and privileges, felt themselves in communion with all their fellow Christians, however widely dispersed. They professed the same faith, joined in substantially the same worship, were fed with the same sacraments, and were ministered unto either by the Apostles themselves, who had all received their commission from the same Lord, or by those whom they had specially appointed and ordained. Thus the different societies of Christians were all united as One Church. They received from the Apostles the regulations they were to observe. They kept up intercourse and fellowship with one another, communicating their doubts and difficulties, their trials and sufferings, and receiving in return such help and sympathy as it was

possible to afford. "If one member suffered, all the members suffered with it, or if one member rejoiced, all the members rejoiced with it."

Too soon, however, there arose amongst them dissensions and jealousies. We find S. Paul complaining to the Christians of Corinth, that "there were contentions among them," that they "were puffed up one against another," one saying, "I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; and another, I am of Cephas; and another, I am of CHRIST." And so ere long these internal disputes were followed by external schisms and heresies; and accordingly the same S. Paul foretells to the presbyters of Ephesus, that "of their own selves should men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them;" and again, warning S. Timothy, that "the time will come when men will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables:" and in like manner S. Peter warns Christians in general, that "there shall be among them false teachers, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, denying the LORD that bought them," while S. John and S. Jude speak of these things as

having actually occurred. "They went out from us," says the former, "but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us." "These be they," says S. Jude, "which separate themselves, sensual, not having the Spirit." And thus amongst those who professed themselves the disciples of CHRIST, there arose heresies and sects in quick succession, corrupting the truth in a greater or less degree, and causing inconceivable injury to His faithful followers, both by the enmity which for the most part they exhibited towards them, and the absurd and revolting misrepresentations of Christianity which they offered to the world.

But in spite of all this, the Church itself remained visibly One and undivided, maintaining the truth which it had received of the LORD, and governed by the ministry which He had constituted. As necessity arose, and opportunity was allowed, its rulers met together, sometimes from the various Churches of a single province, and sometimes from all parts of the world, to put forth statements of the true doctrine which had been held from the beginning, in condemnation of the heresies which had just come into prominence. Thus they guarded their flocks from the vain fancies and dangerous inventions

of men, and cast out of the Church those by whom they were maintained; whilst within its boundaries the same doctrine was everywhere professed, and communion and fellowship existed among all its members. But in process of time, corruption found its way into the sanctuary itself. Doctrines and practices unheard of in the primitive times, came to be regarded as necessary to be believed and observed by all who hoped for salvation. Its rulers grew arrogant and imperious, and strove to exercise lordship not only over their flocks, but over each other. And so the Church became divided. First the West was separated from the East, and then in the course of ages, we in England were divided from both, whilst whole nations which had hitherto adhered to the Church, remained in its communion no longer, but formed religious societies of their own. Now though human motives entered largely into these proceedings on all sides, it is not to be denied that they were mainly occasioned by the sins and shortcomings of Christians. But what a fulfilment is this of the SAVIOUR'S prayer! the rock which He had established for the support of His people, split up into shivers and fragments! the vessel which He had provided to convey them to "the haven where they would be," wrecked and shattered, so that there remained

but boards and broken pieces on which to get safe to land! Still we may be thankful that the remaining parts of the ship are furnished with all things necessary to bring us in safety to the place of our destination; that though some of them are deficient in what is desirable, and others are encumbered with what does but impede their course, yet, if we will but abide faithfully in the portion wherein we find ourselves, we shall arrive in time at the promised harbour. Meanwhile however, when we remember our SAVIOUR'S prayer, it surely becomes us to offer our fervent supplications, and to use our earnest endeavours, that the separated portions of the vessel with their various companies may be brought together again, and form once more a goodly bark; and that those who, when the storm comes, would no longer abide in the ship, but made them vessels of their own, may be induced to forsake the work of their own hands, and return to the Ark of Divine construction.

My brethren, whatever may be the state of the Church, or of any portion of it, the subject of Christian Unity can never be a matter of indifference to any thinking Christian. It was for this, as we have seen, that the SAVIOUR prayed—for this the Apostles laboured, and wrote, and exhorted. It has, however, been a

main object with Satan to disturb and destroy this unity, in which he has but too well succeeded; and now does he use all his efforts to prevent its being restored. And with good reason: for well does he know that in no other way can the work of the Gospel be more effectually hindered, and his own work consequently more effectually accomplished, than by multiplying and continuing divisions among CHRIST's followers. Our LORD prayed that His disciples might be One, that the nations might believe that the FATHER had sent Him, and so be induced to turn from their own idols and vanities, their superstition or unbelief, to serve the Living GOD Whom He had made known. And can we doubt, that if all who profess and call themselves Christians were indeed One, their united efforts to bring the world into captivity to the obedience of CHRIST, would be far more effectual than their separate exertions for the same object are now? Can we doubt that they would draw down upon them a far larger measure of GOD's blessing, and be set free from many difficulties with which they are now impeded? Nay, do we not *know* that our unhappy divisions form one main reason, why many in foreign lands who are sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, refuse to come forth into the marvellous light of the Gospel?

The Bishop of New Zealand, when amongst us, some years ago, gave an instance of this in the case of a New Zealand chief. He was thoroughly dissatisfied with his native idolatry and ready to embrace Christianity, could he only ascertain to what form of it it was his duty to attach himself. The Church of England, the Church of Rome, and Wesleyanism, presented each its system before him, but ere he could decide on their rival claims, he was cut off by death. This is an example, my brethren, one, no doubt, among a thousand, of the evil done among the heathen, to the cause of CHRIST and His Gospel, by the lack of Christian unity; and need we to be told, how our endeavours for the welfare of our brethren at home, are enfeebled and paralysed by the same miserable cause? Whether we seek to educate the young, to instruct the ignorant, to reclaim the wanderer, to console and direct the penitent, ay, or even to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, or to shelter the outcast, our want of religious unanimity, either prevents our acting together, or gives rise to suspicions and jealousies, and so grievously impairs the efficiency of the work we are striving to accomplish. And yet, it is melancholy to observe, in spite of this unhappy experience,—in spite of the prayer of our LORD and the warnings of His holy Apostles, how

little this question of Christian Unity is considered by vast numbers of Christians. To satisfy some trifling scruple of conscience, or to gratify their taste, their temper, or their whims, they will forsake one religious body and attach themselves to another, or even attempt to form one of their own, and yet seem all the while unconscious, that in thus farther rending the body of CHRIST, they are doing any thing at all inconsistent with their Christian character; whilst others, though they join not with them, will regard their proceedings as a mere matter of indifference, involving no violation of duty, either to GOD or man. Alas! how little consistent is such conduct with the exhortation of S. Paul, "I beseech you, brethren, by the Name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

We, my brethren, are members of the Church of England, a portion of the Church Catholic, reformed three centuries ago, professedly after the model of the Church of primitive times. Whatever was thought necessary to be believed and observed in those times, that we intend to believe and observe now; but the additions of subsequent ages we have cast aside. For this, how-

ever, we have become separated from many with whom we were previously in communion, who will neither communicate at *our* altars, nor receive us at *theirs*, nor hold with us any religious intercourse. And yet we make the Bible, the written Word of GOD, the standard of our whole system; not indeed as understood by you or me, this person or that, each one for himself, but as interpreted by the records of the early Church, when the remembrance of the New Testament writers was, so to speak, fresh in men's minds, and the traditions they had imparted, were held fast in their original purity. It has, however, been allowed, even by persons divided from us, that the distinctive characteristics of our communion, afford us peculiar facilities for exerting an influence upon other portions of Christendom, and so disposing them, in GOD's good time, to thoughts of Union and concord. Now if it be so, a heavy responsibility is laid upon us, of which it becomes us anxiously to discharge ourselves; and in this work none are too poor, too ignorant, or too humble to take part. Thus all, however otherwise unable, may help it forward by their prayers. Great things are written in Holy Scripture, of the power of prayer; nor may we doubt that the intercession of our LORD will add peculiar efficacy to the devout supplications of

His disciples, for what He, when on earth, Himself entreated. Let us, then, both in the retirement of our own chamber, in the ordinary services of the LORD's house, and above all at the Holy Eucharist,—that feast of heavenly love, whereby we maintain and testify our union, both with our Divine Master and Head, and also with one another,—regularly offer up our fervent prayers, that all His followers may be again united in visible communion. "Regard not our sins, O LORD, but the faith of Thy Church, and grant Her that peace and Unity which is agreeable to Thy Will. Amen."

But for this purpose we must do more than pray; we must use our own personal efforts; and here, too, there is hardly any one, however obscure and lowly, who cannot do something in this blessed cause. Now we can hardly expect to influence others, unless we strive to be at peace amongst ourselves; but it is unhappily too well known, that such we are not at present. "For the divisions of Reuben are great searchings of heart." And yet we have only one rule given us to walk by, one manual of faith, devotion, and practice, to which we are all alike bound to conform—our Book of Common Prayer. How then is it that our differences have arisen? I believe, from nothing so much as our *neglect* to conform to it; nor will they be ever removed,

until,—without reference to the opinions or practices of our neighbours,—we are scrupulously careful to be guided by its directions. We of the clergy have all declared our unfeigned assent and consent to all and every thing which it contains; and you of the laity, who have not time nor opportunity to inquire for yourselves, may be well satisfied to receive it on the testimony of your Church, which all the hostile efforts of 300 years have been unable to invalidate or even bring into suspicion—as most agreeable to the minds and purposes of the old fathers, and containing "nothing but the very pure Word of GOD, or that which is agreeable to the same." Let us all then accept unhesitatingly its statements, hold fast by what it teaches, adopt its language, and obey its directions,—those which it gives, both for the solemnization of the Church's worship and ordinances, and those which relate to our own domestic and individual conduct as her members; so shall we be drawn one towards another, and come at length to mind the same thing. Meanwhile, my brethren, let us strive, in the spirit of meekness, to remove the misconceptions of others with regard to our own belief, and be careful never to impute to them sentiments which they disown. This would seem to be our duty with a view to promote Unity amongst ourselves. And walk-

ing by this rule, we shall be in a better position to influence for the same purpose the Churches abroad from whom we are miserably estranged.

It is unhappily true, that among the members of those Churches, there prevails with regard to our own Communion the greatest ignorance and misconception. We are looked upon, for the most part, as a mere Protestant sect, utterly deficient in the essential characteristics of a Church. It becomes us, in the first place, to seek to make them acquainted with our true character as a Church, dating its existence from Apostolic times, and still maintaining, in all their essential particulars, the doctrine and discipline which prevailed at the beginning. Such a course would doubtless, by GOD'S blessing, draw towards us the sympathy of many, and thus the way might be prepared for a more just judgment, and so the chief hindrance removed which lies in the way of a restoration of Christian Unity. At any rate, my brethren, we, as a Church,—if our true principles were but thoroughly known, apart from the Puritan heresy and latitudinarian indifference with which they are too often associated—should remove the prejudices, and even win the respect of many who now look upon us with distrust or aversion, and so become better able to exert ourselves to advantage in the great

cause we are now considering. But whilst we seek to make Catholics of other lands acquainted with the true character of our own Church, we should at the same time be especially careful to do nothing to weaken their allegiance to their own Communion, or to tempt them to revolt from the spiritual rule of their authorized pastors. Such a proceeding would be schismatical, base and sinful. To promote, as we are able, the reform of abuses in a Church, is one thing; to encourage the establishment of rival sects, is quite another. The one is the surest way of promoting in the end a lasting Unity. The other is but to increase and perpetuate division. We ourselves frequently complain, that Bishops and priests are sent amongst us by a foreign potentate, for the avowed purpose of drawing off members from our Church, and so maintaining and continuing the schism. We should be doubly careful to give no countenance to any such proceeding amongst others. We may indeed lawfully provide for the religious wants of our countrymen when sojourning in strange lands, which would otherwise be unsupplied; but we should stedfastly set our face against all attempts to proselytise from other Churches, or to promote amongst their members a spirit of insubordination to them that have the rule over them.

But there are, my brethren, national communities of Christians, living apart from any portion of the Church, whom it becomes us not to overlook in our endeavours to promote the cause of Christian Unity. Those I mean, who, having lost the blessing of an Apostolic ministry, have substituted in its place ministers of their own, who can claim for their ministrations no higher than human authority. Now whilst carefully abstaining from any unseemly exultation in our own superior privileges, or any condescending exhibition of patronage towards them; whilst thankfully recognizing their inheritance of much Christian truth and their possession of many valuable means of grace, it still becomes us to endeavour to make them see their deficiencies, and excite in them the desire to have them supplied. And here again, I know of nothing more likely to be effectual than to make them acquainted with the true principles of our own Church, as maintaining the doctrine of primitive times. If from this they could be brought to compare their communions with our own, and would follow up the comparison and discipline of the early Church, we might hope that at least some amongst them would be led to see themselves wanting in various particulars, which in the first and purest ages of Christianity, were considered of the

highest importance, and so to take measures for obtaining them. Should this ever come to pass, it would indeed be a great and blessed step towards the restoration of that Unity for which the SAVIOUR prayed; but we can never hope that all Christian communities will be again gathered together in One, whilst any of them make light of doctrine which His Church has always maintained, or refuse to be brought under that constitution of government which His Apostles everywhere established.

But, my brethren, in the prosecution of this holy cause, our chief concern must ever be with those in our own land who have separated from us. We live, alas! amongst the adherents of a hundred sects, who have either themselves or their forefathers withdrawn from the Church to follow inventions of their own. Now amongst many of these, we cannot doubt that there are to be found a goodly number of individuals influenced by the love of CHRIST, and simply desirous to be conformed to His will; and with such, both for their sake, for our own, and for the sake of Him, our Divine Master and LORD, we cannot but be anxious to be brought into Union. How, then, may we hope, with this view, to influence them? In addition to the other means, we should surely press on them, as we have the opportunity, the evils of our present

divided state: how contrary it is to the will of CHRIST, how injurious to ourselves, and to those whom we all desire to influence for their good; we might ask them whether to follow, as they *all* do, in a greater or less degree, the inventions of men, and even to call themselves, as *some* do, by the names of their founders, is not an aggravation of the conduct of the Corinthians reprehended by the Apostle, who said, "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of CHRIST." "Christian is my name," said one of old, "and Catholic is my surname," and well would it be, would all be contented with these appellations! Must not the advantages which any may find or fancy in their separated societies, be dearly purchased by the fact of their separation? Are they such as to make it worth while, for their sake, to rend the body of CHRIST, to prostrate the SAVIOUR'S prayer, and to disregard an Apostle's injunction? Oh, that all who are thus astray, would but return to the communion of their true Mother! They would find with her privileges and blessings which now they know not of—the full Catholic faith, Apostolical order, an edifying ritual, the heavenly nourishment of CHRIST'S Body and Blood, the ministry of the HOLY GHOST in Confirmation, the graces of the lesser Sacraments, the due observance of holy times, communion with

the saints living and departed; yea, an increased supply of all heavenly gifts.

It is indeed most sad to look out on the present state of Christendom and view its divisions. But still there are not wanting signs of encouragement. God has opened the eyes of many who were before insensible to it, to see the unhappiness of this state, and to long and strive and pray that it may be remedied—that the time may come when Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim, but all shall be gathered together in One. May that happy day, by the mercy of God, soon arrive! Meanwhile, however, we may comfort ourselves with the thought that though the outward Unity of the Church has been long interrupted, there is still a real invisible Unity which cannot but be preserved. In all its portions, however visibly separated, the same worship essentially is still offered, the same rites are observed, the same Sacraments are dispensed; and through these all its faithful members are made One with their Great Head, and in Him with one another. Nor may we doubt that with them are associated in the same Unity, many who, though having been partakers of the one baptism, have yet, through ignorance, or misconception, or circumstances beyond their own control, been deprived of the chief appointed

means of maintaining the Union with their LORD which was then begun. "The Spirit which worketh by means may not be tied by means,"[1] but has ways, which we know not, of supplying the grace which in the ordinary course such means were instituted to convey. And so doubtless His secret influence often effectually worketh in those who would otherwise be deprived of it, and preserves them One with their LORD and with all His faithful people.

It may not be permitted us, while we remain on earth to enjoy any more palpable union than what has been now faintly sketched. The different portions of CHRIST'S Church may remain in their outward isolation, and other societies of Christians may keep apart from all; but should it ever be our blissful lot to share the rest of Paradise and the glories of heaven, we shall find that in the Church of the first-born there assembled, all are One indeed, with nothing to disturb the celestial harmony, nothing to interrupt the universal communion.

J. O.

[1] Bishop Hall.

SERMON IX.

THE UNITY OF THE BODY OF CHRIST.[1]

S. John xvii. 21.

"That they all may be One; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be One in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

Dear Brethren! these parting words,—the prayer which ended the *last* charge,—the *dying* charge of the Lord Jesus to His disciples, and therefore the charge to us, and all who are called by that affectionate name, indicate and enforce one of the plainest and most undeniable of Christian duties, unity:—unity in the kingdom which Christ the King has set up in this world,—in it, though not of it. Yet, in spite of explicit prophecies about this kingdom in its divine unity; in spite of the Gospel record, where this kingdom is constantly spoken of, and of the

[1] Preached at S. Mary's, Aberdeen, Scotland.

Apostolic epistles where its establishment and progress are constantly alluded to; in spite of all this (whether to be people's sin or their misfortune,) they do not obey Jesus the King in that particular way in which it is His revealed will that He should be obeyed. People say they are, and think they are His people, without being the united subjects of that Catholic monarchy, wherein is the one Lord, the one Faith, and the one Baptism. Since the time of Cain, the first separatist, the first will-worshipper, the strong tendency of corrupt human nature has been to serve God, or to try to do so, each man in his own way, forgetting that it is to the one Body,—outwardly and visibly one,—that the fulness of the Gospel privileges and blessings is promised, that otherwise the Church, Christ's Kingdom, has not free scope—is weak and crippled—does not look like a monarchy, and the world refuses to believe in the King, and that the Father has sent Him.

People forget that the Bride, the Lamb's wife is one, "the Church which is His Body:" and that they must, before they can be real members of His Body, come "in the Unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

That Unity, outward and visible Unity is

the condition of our receiving the full blessings of the Gospel Kingdom, is proved by the way in which the Prophets describe it. Instead of speaking of individuals as independent and separate units, they view the whole company of the Faithful as one Body,—that elect, Holy Mother the Church, of which, baptized individuals are the children. "Lift up thine eyes, and behold," says the prophetical record: "all these gather themselves together, and come to thee." And again, in words whose sweet strains, as sung by this choir when the foundation stone of S. Mary's was laid, yet linger in the ear,—"O, thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted; behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the LORD: and great shall be the peace of thy children."

But let us not forget, brethren, that the question of Christian Unity can only be safely approached in a Christian spirit. And so, the Association for the Promotion of the Unity of Christendom, approaches it in the spirit of humble and earnest day-by-day prayer. The daily use of a short collect, together with one "Our FATHER," for the intention of the Associa-

tion, is the only obligation on those who join it; and in the case of priests, the offering at stated periods of the Holy Sacrifice, for the same intention. This Association whose anniversary we are celebrating, in effect, proclaims that Christian Unity is to be attained, not by eager disputes, not by keen controversial subtilty, but by that humble, and at the same time practical spirit which diligently muses upon, and trembles at God's word; which asks, not "what is the least that His words can possibly mean?" but rather "how shall I be most likely to attain and act up to their fullest and deepest meaning?"

And if such a spirit is always needful for every inquirer after religious truth, it is doubly so in our search after religious Unity, when we cannot but begin our inquiry with a confession of much short-coming, of much sin. For whatever true Christian Unity may be, it is surely very unlike the actual condition of Christendom at the present day. We cannot but feel sorrow when we see the seamless coat torn to tatters,—West divided from East, and East from West; we cannot but feel sorrow and shame both, when we see the West torn into antagonistic fragments, and think what our own share and blame, and that of our forefathers, may be in the misery; when we see those for whom Christ died, whom as His last charge He

commanded to love one another; for whom above all other blessings, He prayed to His Father that they might be One, biting and devouring one another:—Lord, how long! before Thy latest prayer be realized, until the one fold of the one Shepherd be seen again!

"How long wilt Thou forget the East,
Where first Thy truth was spread?
Apostles there Thy name confessed,
And blessed martyrs bled.

"Far from the West bid hatred flee,
And unbelief and pride;
How long shall those that love not Thee,
Thy seamless coat divide?"

Much would we give up of cherished predilection, of cherished usages and ritual, yea, every thing that is not essential to the being,—I would almost add, were it lawful, well-being,—of the Church, in order to heal the broken Unity of Christendom. We pray for the grace of a self-searching, self-sacrificing spirit, that no obstinate insular prejudices, which as British Churchmen are amongst our besetting sins, may mar the work of Godly Unity. We pray that no vain-glorious "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ," may keep the children of the household apart. "Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptised in the name of Paul?

. . . . for while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal, and walk as men?"

There is a wide spread opinion at the present day,—which it is one of the purposes of our Association to counteract,—that there must of necessity be sects among Christians; that it is impossible it should be otherwise; that the proverb, "many men, many minds," is true in the most unlimited sense; that as our Blessed Lord did not command anything impossible, therefore Christian Unity does not require that men should all be members of one and the same outward and visible church; but only that while they remain divided into a multiplicity of sects, (or denominations, which is the soft Protestant name for "schism,") they should be spiritually united into an invisible Church, and, as is plausibly said, "agree to differ."

It is this sort of Unity which many people call Christian Unity. But the doctrine of Holy Scripture and Holy Church is this; that all the baptised, i.e. all Christians, are bound to belong to one outward and visible Church; locally and geographically separated, of course; speaking with different tongues, and it may be with differing rites, ceremonies, and usages; but all confessing the same creeds,—the œcumenical creeds of the Catholic Church,—without addi-

tion thereto, or subtraction therefrom; all using substantially the same worship; all celebrating the same sacraments; all under the ministrations of the Priesthood through the Apostolical succession, which is of the essence of the Church; and without which, it ceases to be. "As My FATHER hath sent Me, even so send I you; go ye therefore." When the Head and King of the Church commanded Unity, He prohibited sects and denominations among Christians; and therefore the setting up of them is a plain breach of Christian Unity, and a sin against GOD, the LORD of the Church. Listen, brethren, to the prayer of JESUS the KING, in behalf of the Divine monarchy, just before He gave Himself for it. My text is a portion of that prayer. He said, "neither pray I for these (i.e. the Apostles) alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be One, as Thou, FATHER, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be One in us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest Me, I have given them; that they may be One, even as We are One: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in Us."

Brethren! these words of Him Who is the Truth, as well as the Way and the Life, are so wonderful, so awful, that I hardly dare enlarge

upon them. Christians, you hear, ought to be One together, as the FATHER is with the SON, words which I should not dare to say, unless He had first spoken them. This wonderful union, the union of the last and greatest of the monarchies, the fifth,—the Christian Empire which is destined to swallow up and supersede all the rest—is spoken of as immediately proceeding from another marvellous gift, the "glory" given by GOD the SON to His bride the Church, as He received it from GOD the FATHER. And again, it is closely connected with the Gift of perfection—"that they may be made perfect in one;" and thirdly, with the union of Christians with their King, the LORD JESUS, and with His FATHER; "that they may be One in us: I in them, and Thou in Me." And lastly, it is made the condition of the conversion of the world; the fulness of the Gentiles shall not be gathered in; blindness must continue upon Israel, until the broken unity of Christendom is mended. Our missions are comparatively fruitless because of this wide-spread blight, in which we all more or less share. "That the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me," said JESUS; and the world has not yet believed, just because Christians have set themselves to counteract their SAVIOUR'S prayer. You see, then, brethren, how the Association for Promo-

ting the Unity of Christendom works and prays for the fulfilment of the LORD's latest prayer. Judge whether, when our King spoke, as He did in the text, of Christian Unity, He meant nothing more than that sort of union which prevails between the members of many divided sects, the "agreeing to differ" system as it is called; or the undisguised rivalries, the strifes, the confusion, and every evil work which religious disunion has produced. Surely you can answer that question, brethren; and even if you could not, the visible face of the world would do it for you. Where are the promised fruits of Unity? Does the severance of Catholic Christendom into East and West, each standing proudly aloof from the other, and the Anglican Communion from both, although all three are rooted and built on the same rock of Apostolic succession,—does that better the cause which the Head of the Church prayed for? Does it help to force upon heathendom the acknowledgment of the "one LORD, the one faith, and the one Baptism?" Does hydra-headed Protestant sectarianism,—with nothing to rest upon to entitle it, as a whole, or in any of its component parts, to the name of Church—does that mend the matter? Or is it not but too true, alas, that by its disunion and fierce and bitter disputes, agreeing as its allies do in nothing but in vilifying

the Catholic Faith, the Catholic Episcopate and Catholic usages, they have thrown contempt on the Christian name, and tempted professing Christians to lapse into apostasy and unbelief? The words of JESUS are sufficiently plain, yet if they *did* admit of a doubt, to whom must we go for the solution of it and for the interpretation of the words, but to His Apostles, whom He commissioned to teach,—to them and to their immediate successors in the early centuries of the faith, when it was yet unviolated, and the Church's god-like Unity still unbroken? To His Apostles, and the Episcopate which they transmitted, He said, "He that heareth you, heareth Me." Now we know perfectly well, how the early unbroken Church understood the LORD'S words. The ancient Fathers have told us, with one voice, and by their united action, when by their ministry, the Church was set up amid the fires of Pentecost, how CHRIST'S prayer was literally fulfilled. "The multitude of them that believed were together." Every Christian was a member of the same visible Church; none who were "without," beyond the pale of that holy enclosure, had any pretensions to be called Christians at all. The way the holy Apostles and their primitive successors acted, showed how they understood the LORD'S words. Their deeds were the practical commen-

tary on that prayer; and so we know that CHRIST commanded all Christians to be members of the same outward and visible society, practising visible intercommunion, however geographically separated, because the Apostles set up One, and One only, outward and visible Church, wherever they preached the LORD'S Gospel, by baptizing all nations in the Name of the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST.

And you must not think, brethren, that in those early days, there was no temptation to Christians to break up into schisms and sects. There were opportunities of division in abundance, then as now, if the primitive believers had not been careful to guard against it. Do not say, and do not allow others to say, if you can help it, that there must be sects now, because there are so many differences of opinion, although, had *we* lived in the times of the Apostles, we should have remained in one Church. The truth is, that to divide the Church, to split it up into fragments, is Satan's master-stroke of policy. It was the very first device which he tried against the faith, even before he stirred up his evil instruments to shed the blood of the first martyr. At the very outset, "there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration." For heart-

burnings like that, or less, many a schism in later times has sprung up; but the Holy Body of CHRIST was not allowed then to be divided; there was too much faith and love among the bulk of the primitive believers for that. The holy Apostles knew that they dared not prevent disputes by the modern expedient of separating from the Body of CHRIST; the rent which had begun must be closed, not completed, and so the Greeks and the Hebrews remained in one church, under the Episcopate of "James, the LORD'S brother," Bishop of Jerusalem, and Metropolitan. Afterwards, as we know, yet more agitating questions arose, as to whether Christians were bound to keep the law of Moses; yet, although the dispute raged fiercely, and long, and wide; although the subject of it was most important, touching the very vitals of the faith; although those who held that the law was still binding, even on the baptized, openly taught that none who believed and acted on the contrary doctrine, could be saved; still the Apostles would not for one moment, allow their converts to be divided into two churches, and this, because by so doing, they would have made a schism in the body of CHRIST. Now look at the teaching of the Apostles, as well as at what they did. I will quote but one specimen of what they taught, although I might quote

hundreds; this is one, where the sort of unity required is most plainly set forth, namely, that it is not a unity of spirit only, (which is all that sectarians aim at,—the joint holding of what they are pleased to call essentials, and then "agreeing to differ" as to all the rest, and worshipping in different bodies,—where it is declared, I say, that it is not a unity of spirit only,) but a unity of body. "By One Spirit ye are all baptized into One body. Now ye are the Body of CHRIST, and members in particular." But can these words of eternal truth apply to Christians who are divided, as Catholic Christendom now is, still less to the Protestant sects—to the separate denominations among us? Now, suppose all done that can be done, while these unhappy divisions continue to exist; let us suppose all separatists to have banished,—not in words and professions only, but in reality,—all rivalry, all animosities and jealousies; to have learned to live like brethren; to pray and strive for one another's good—in supposing this, I am supposing what never yet has happened, nor *can* happen, or which, if it *did* happen, it could not, without a miracle, continue for one hour—but suppose it, and yet I persist in asking, how are the words of Scripture fulfilled? In the case supposed, we should have many bodies with one spirit, but we are com-

manded to be not one spirit only, but one body. "There is One body and One spirit," saith the infallible Word. But is it not the case, that people in these days understand that text as if it had been said, "There is One body, *that is*, One spirit?" And has it come to this, that people dare to say that the HOLY GHOST added these words, "One Body," as a sort of surplusage, without a meaning? Is that the result to which our "Bible Christians" have come? If it be lawful for Christians to divide, and separate, and schismatise, why did S. Paul exclaim so loudly against it, as if it were positive blasphemy to class Christians into sects and parties, even by the honoured names of Paul and of Apollos? And above all, if the LORD of the Church had meant nothing more than that kindly feeling and mutual co-operation should exist among His followers, while they were split up into a thousand parties, would He have described their union in the awful words of the text, "That they all may be One, as Thou, FATHER, art in Me, and I in Thee; that they also may be One in Us." And again, "That they may be *One*, even as We are One?" Brethren! it is time to remind divided Christendom, as our Association, with its 6000 members and upwards, is doing, that Christians were not always divided among themselves as

we now see them; that there was a time, before Satan had succeeded in severing East from West, in setting up south against north, and in subdividing each against itself,—there was a time, when they were One body and One spirit both. The Church, which now lies shivered like a broken mirror, and only here and there reflects from some fragment, a spark of the Divine glory, was then the dazzling unbroken glass, reflecting the very image of her FATHER Who is in heaven. There was then no geographical religion, no English Church, no Scottish Church, (with its sectarian name "Episcopal," which we are so resolved to cling to,) no Roman Church, no Greek Church, unless in the limited and well understood exceptional arrangement, where difference of language interfered, when strangers and foreigners were dwelling among the inhabitants of another nation. They kept to their peculiar usages, but without breaking intercommunion. They were One whereever they dwelt; wherever they sojourned they found "brethren beloved, partakers of the benefit." It was not as now, that a Christian Bishop, or Priest, or layman, by crossing a channel, a river, or a mountain, finds himself among men of another communion, from whose altars he is shut out by a formal deed of excommunication; but in those better times,

furnished with letters of peace and goodwill from the Church at home, he might journey from Britain to India, and from India to Ethiopia, and in every city and country he entered, he was acknowledged, loved, and honoured, according to his place and station in the Church, as a father in CHRIST, as a son or a brother in the bonds of the Gospel, as the case might be, by every Christian in wide Christendom. He might wander among men of other tongues, and hear a strange language, but the worship and sacraments of his holy mother he always found, and was gladly welcomed to. He found nothing strange there; he found a true foretaste of eternity's joy—a perfect heaven upon earth.

And is there, brethren, do you suppose, no way of restoring the lost Unity, of finding the missing link? Let our Association, with its increasing thousands of brethren, in the estranged obediences of Greece, Rome, and Britain, answer the question. Prayer, united prayer, is our answer. Satan's device for first neutralising and then uprooting the Church, shall fall before it; we know it shall, for the sure word of prophecy tells us, "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempests and not comforted .... all thy children shall be taught of the LORD, and great shall be the peace of thy children." The sure word tells us, that before the end

comes, "Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely," that "the knowledge of the LORD GOD shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea."

Brethren, let us strive with the strength of our united prayers, to hasten the fulfilment of these noble promises. That the SAVIOUR'S latest prayer shall remain unanswered, cannot be,—His prayer, Whom the FATHER ever heareth, that it should remain unanswered, it were blasphemy to think. But He expects us to use the means; He expects us to work together with Him. In so doing, let us imitate the primitive saints, who, in their day, prayed with earnestness, and toiled with success, in behalf of godlike unity. Let us follow their example now, and we may hope for their success. GOD'S word, if faithfully spoken and faithfully acted upon, shall not return to Him void—it shall accomplish that whereunto He hath sent it; and there shall be peace and truth again in the One fold of the One Shepherd. And this, please GOD, "in our time;" for do we not daily pray for it, "Give peace in our time, O LORD?" May He grant it, for the sake of the Church's King and Head, JESUS CHRIST our LORD; to Whom, in unity with the FATHER and the HOLY GHOST, be ascribed all praise, honour, glory, might, majesty, dominion, and power, now and for ever! Amen.

A. R.

SERMON X.

SHALL NOT THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND BE HEARD?

Acts vii. 1, 2.

"Then said the High Priest, Are these things so? and he said,—Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken."

All that the advocate for Catholic Re-union need ask for in these days, is a fair and free inquiry on the part of the bishops of the Church, and especially him who as Pope, presides over the Roman branch of it. "Are these things so?" And if the Jewish High Priest could thus give S. Stephen a patient hearing, shall the patriarchs and bishops of the Christian Church deny their brethren such a hearing? God forbid. Let the inquiry be once instituted in regard to the status of the Church of England:—Has she retained or lost the elements of Catholicity? Let this inquiry be made first by the Pope, and then by a council of the Church to

which we willingly refer the determination of our differences;[1] then, and not before, may we hope for the restoration of Catholic unity—nay, we confidently affirm, that it is only by such inquiry on the part of the Holy Father and other bishops of the Church—East and West—that any real progress can be made towards the Re-union of Christendom. O, that GOD would put it into their hearts to ask themselves "are these things so," is this all that separates us? are these the only differences which rend the unity of the Church? If so, are not the conditions of Re-union still within our reach? It is in full faith in CHRIST'S Promise, that hell shall not prevail against the Church, that we leave this question in the hands of the successor of S. Peter, and the other bishops, and now turn to the great body of professing Christians, crying with S. Stephen, "men, brethren, and fathers, hearken." Hear me as I plead for Catholic unity; but look not for any new arguments, for we have none to offer. Like S. Stephen, we go over the old ground such as the fathers trod, what they suggested as the ground of unity in matters of doctrine and discipline, that we submit to you: in a word, the following are a few articles of inquiry which we humbly offer on the authority of others, as

[1] Cf. Archbp. Bramhall, p. 100.

making most for unity; showing as they do, that the Church of England has retained sufficient, at least, of the elements of Catholicity in regard to doctrine and discipline, to form the basis of renewed negociation for unity.

Now the first obvious article of inquiry, is touching the so-called Reformation. Assuming that that was an evil, if not altogether, at least in too many of its consequences; let it be asked *what was the cause of it?* with whom does the blame (if any) rest, as the original promoters of it? And here let us at once premise, that if we are ever to be at unity with our Catholic brethren, who are now estranged from us in sentiment, but whom no estrangement can separate from our affections, it must be by mutual confession and mutual repentance. Hear then, "brethren and fathers," the words of one of the ablest advocates of the Roman Catholic communion. "It cannot be denied," says Dean Möhler,[1] "that priests, bishops, and Popes, trampling under foot the most sacred duties, suffered too often the Heavenly fire to be extinguished. Catholics have *nothing to fear from such concessions*, and they have never shrunk from making them. How indeed, is it possible to question the profound decay of the ministry, when the very existence of Protestant-

[1] Cf. La Symbolique, tome ii. pp. 33, 34.

ism is an irrefragable proof of it. No, never would such extravagances have seen the light, still less would they have been able to gain popularity, if the teachers of the people had been true to their calling.

"Learn then, O Protestants, to measure the vastness of the abuses with which you reproach us, by the enormity of your own errors. This *is the ground upon which the two Churches will one day meet and become united. In the consciousness of our common sins* we ought to exclaim both the one and the other "we have all failed; the Church alone could not err; we have all sinned; the Church alone is pure from every blemish,—as for her she remains for ever without spot." Hear again an advocate on the side of the Church of England—"It is what is unholy," writes Dr. Pusey,[1] "*on both sides* which keeps us apart. As each by GOD'S grace grows in holiness, the Churches will recognise more and more the presence of GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT in the other, and what now hinders the reunion of the Western Church will fall off." "As the contest," he adds, "with unbelief increases, the Churches which have received and transmitted the substance of the faith, as deposited in our common creeds, *must be on the same side.* If one member suf-

[1] Cf. Letter published in English Churchman.

fers, the other members suffer with it, and so in the increasing health of one, others too will benefit. It is not as we would have had it, but GOD'S will be done; He brings about His own ends as in His sovereign wisdom He sees to be best."

But apart from the moral cause, let the holy fathers and Bishops inquire who were the prime *political* movers in the work of separation from Rome? Did it originate with the English Church as Reformed? No; it came in the first throes of it, from the very womb of the Roman Catholic Church as such. Was it not, for instance, with the free consent of all the orders of the kingdom, with the concurrence and approbation of a large body of the Bishops and Abbots, declared *before the Reformation*, that "The Roman Bishop had no greater jurisdiction within the realm of England, conferred upon him by GOD in Holy Scripture, than any other foreign Bishop;" while the very title, "Head of the Church," as applied to the king, was it not introduced by the Roman Catholics, and afterwards laid aside by the Church of England, as seeming to trench too much on the prerogatives of CHRIST Himself? Now "are these things so?" Are these facts? If so, "Rome alone has not a dispensation to sin without repentance." Let her repent at

best as well as ourselves, with whom we have all the hours in this respect, comparatively vast. But assuming the words of our own text, that we were entirely to exist as the Reformation, which God forbid, still how do matters stand now? Is there not a yearning on the part of English Catholics for the unity which our forefathers lost? If so, can such yearning be otherwise than from God? and if God will assuredly accept this as our plea, shall the Bishops and fathers of the Church refuse it? True, we are separated from the visible communion of the Catholic world, but not entirely. It is true, we protest against such separation, and it is our comfort to know that "it is not separation which makes schism, but the cause. Dead and sinful members sever themselves." I say that God will accept this plea. Honour is the highest court of equity. To make God abide by the letter of visible communion, and not by the spirit of real internal communion, is to dishonour the Divine Nature —to degrade heaven to the level of a common law court, from its high throne of equity. Believe then, the Bishops of the Catholic Church condemn us, let them feel the heart which now beats in the Church of England. Let them judge her as to her motive—and what is that? To live and labour on in internal communion

with all true Catholics, until such time as GOD will restore the *external* communion, which she desires; and what if He delays it? she is content to go on in patience, believing the entire substance of saving necessary truth, revealed to the Apostles,—ready to embrace all other supernatural verities, when determined by the collective Church,—willing to judge charitably of those who judge her harshly; to exclude on her part none from the Catholic communion and hope of salvation, either Eastern, or Western, or Northern, or Southern Christians, who profess the faith of the Apostles and primitive fathers, as established in the first general councils, and comprehended in the Apostolic, Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds; to rejoice at their doing well—to sorrow for their sins—to pray for their perseverance in the true faith—for their reduction from their respective errors and their reunion with the Church, in case they be divided from it—in a word, to seek the peace of Christendom, and the reunion of the Catholic Church, contributing her daily prayers with those of all Saints, that GOD would hasten His kingdom, and shortly perfect the Body of CHRIST, which is His Church.

But the Church of England is in heresy—it is said. Now "Are these things so? men, brethren and fathers, hearken." We admit that

there is too much private judgment on matters of doctrine, in individual members of the Church, nay more, that the law officers of the crown have sought to impose their heretical judgment on the Church; but the Church, as such, is answerable for, and answerable to, neither one nor the other; whatever individual caprice or state authority may do, the Scriptural voice of the Church is the same—her Catholic formularies are intact. Look for instance at the Creeds, which she holds in common with the Catholic Church in all ages. On this point at any rate, there can be no doubt; but what of the thirty-nine Articles? Now we admit the Calvinistic bias of these Articles, but what does the introductory declaration affirm? "Men of all sorts take the Articles for them." The thirty-nine Articles, that is, are a concordat rather than a code of necessary truth, else why are not the laity bound by them? No. The Three Creeds, they—they are the groundwork of our faith. We say with you, "This is the Catholic faith." And how nobly the Church of England has contended for the doctrines contained in those Creeds, especially that of the ever Blessed Trinity, let the writings of her divines testify, by whom the torrent of deism was stopped in the last century; and then mark well the Liturgy of the Church of England,

especially the Eucharistic office; that office is based on the Clementine, and as such, offers a ground for unity with the Western Church in sacramentals. And is not the consecration Scriptural as well as canonical? Is not the language throughout, such as teaches the Real Presence? And what if there be any defect in the mode of consecration, which GOD forbid! does not the prayer of consecration state the intention of the priest or celebrant, to "act" according to CHRIST'S *holy institution?*"

These are saving words, which must prevail with the great High Priest of the Church, to make the act of consecration His own. The sacrifice on the earthly altar, being so made one with that on the heavenly altar, as exhibited in and by the Lamb, and continued in its efficacy for ever. True, we give in both kinds, but will Rome herself say that this is not Apostolic or Catholic? Has she not allowed it even of late years, in certain cases? and is not the withholding the cup, "matter of discipline," as she says, which she can alter if she thinks it desirable? Again, it is true that the blessed Sacrament is not reserved at least so generally in the English Church as it is in the Roman, or even Scotch Churches. Nay, the Articles seem to forbid it. "But is this so?" Hear what is set forth in the authorized Latin Prayer

Book in Queen Elizabeth's reign, on this point. "Quod si contingat eodem die Cœnam Domini in ecclesiâ celebrari, tunc sacerdos in Cœnâ *tantum sacramenti servabit* quantum sufficit ægroto, et mox finitâ Cœnâ una cum aliquibus qui intersunt ibit ad ægrotum." And well might Paul IV. and Pius IV., offer to confirm the Prayer Book of the Church of England, if Queen Elizabeth would acknowledge the Pope's supremacy! Well might Roman Catholics conform as they did to its services for the first twelve years of Queen Elizabeth's reign, until, that is, they were formally prevented by the Bull of Pius V., (February 23, 1569.) The book itself, especially the Latin Prayer Book, which is still enjoined by authority of convocation on the universities and the English clergy in their private devotions, as much as the daily use of the Breviary is on the Roman Catholic clergy—That book, I say, both in its English and Latin form, is full of Catholic feeling, as it is in essentials conformable to the Catholic faith. Despise then if you will, the Prayer Book as a whole, but deny not its Catholicity; so long as we retain that book in its integrity, we have not left the Church of Rome or any other branch of the true Catholic Church, in the essentials of the faith. There are the Creeds, which we receive and hold in the same sense in which the

primitive fathers held to be sufficient (cf. the Council of Ephesus, A.D. 431). There are the Sacraments, and especially the two great Sacraments of the Gospel, which they received,—why then exclude us "a cœtu participantium?" O remove this disability, at least in the case of those who present themselves for communion, confessing their sins, and professing their belief in the real Presence. Surely if we believe with all true Catholics in the grace of the Sacraments, we might leave them thus in GOD'S own Hands, to work their own end—the Union of the body of the faithful in CHRIST. But it is said, You have not Apostolic orders, you have no priesthood. Again, we ask, "Are these things so?" We hold that the Apostolical succession is the nerve and sinew of Apostolical Unity. But have we retained that succession? Now to enter fully into this question, is beyond the limits of this discourse; we suggest it as a matter of inquiry for the Bishops of the Church. First let the testimony of such as Bossuet and other theologians of the Roman Catholic school —let their testimony be first taken in regard to the validity of English orders; let it be further inquired, whether the English succession is not derived from the Irish and Italian.[1]

[1] *Vide* Appendix.

But why, it will be said, why plead for an Apostolic succession of Bishops? Do you not ignore the office of the priest? But "are these things so?" *First*, in regard to ordination, what are the terms of the commission? "Receive the HOLY GHOST, for the office and work of a priest in the Church of GOD, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands; whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven, and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained." And what is the form of absolution which the priest is to use, after receiving a confession? "Our LORD JESUS CHRIST, who hath left power to His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, of His great mercy forgive thee thine offences, and by His authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST. Amen." Awful words! who would dare to utter them, but they who have the inheritance of the priesthood, and value it. Truly, the Church of England speaks not here with stammering lips, but with all the boldness of the true Spouse of CHRIST.

But what priesthood is that which dishonours the successor of S. Peter? You admit that your orders come through Rome, and yet do you not ignore the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome? Now we acknowledge the orders of

the Roman Church, but in regard to the supremacy let the Holy Father and Bishops ask, "Whence and when arose this Papal claim; is it of Apostolic or modern date? It not a Primacy of order enough, without a supremacy of authority? Would not this which we so willingly acknowledge, satisfy the honour of the See of S. Peter? Would it not give his successors the presidency in a council of the Western Church? Let the supremacy rest with the *whole Church* as represented in council, and presided over by the Western Patriarch, and the just claims of the Catholic world would be met. Is not this the teaching of the fathers?"

"For this,"[1] saith S. Cyprian, "is that one Church which holdeth and possesseth all the power of its Spouse, our LORD. In this we preside—for the honour and unity of this we fight."

So S. Augustine,[2] "Seeing the Pastoral charge is common to us all who bear the Episcopal office, although thou sittest in a higher and more eminent place." In a word—let it be known that so far from dishonouring the See of S. Peter, we admit with S. Cyprian that our LORD did promise the keys to S. Peter, in behalf of the Church, and as representing it in its

[1] S. Cyp. Ep. 73.

[2] S. Aug. ad Bonif. contra duas Epist. Pelag. i. 1.

unity. "Petrus respondit unus pro omnibus *quia unitas in omnibus.*"

But looking at the Church of England as you see her *outwardly*, can you discover the Bride of CHRIST? If she is "all glorious within," as holding the Catholic faith, where is now her "clothing of wrought gold?" Now without attaching any moment to the externals of religion in themselves, we can still point to our Catholic tokens,—are not the Eucharistic vestments still the legal and rightful dress of the English priest? are they not being restored in some churches? Look too at the altars themselves, as you now see them in so many of the churches throughout England; do they not set forth all that is Catholic and lovely in type and symbol? is the Cross any longer ignored? are the jewelled chalice, and altar lights, and perfume of incense forbidden in the sanctuary? Is not the Church of England again resuming her Bridal ornaments one by one, which in her mourning and affliction she had laid aside for a time—or rather, of which the profane hand of the world had for a time well nigh despoiled her? Are not our bishops once more seen amongst us, duly habited according to their sacred order with mitre and crozier, as though the Church heard the voice of the Bridegroom in these latter days, and was "making herself heard?"

O, well may the Catholic heart beat with joy at such a sight. Such are not the signs of a Church dead in heresy, or destroyed by schism; but one instinct with new life and grace.

But lastly, inquire and see whether another Catholic token is seen amongst us, I mean the works of Catholic love: call to mind the loss the Church of England sustained in the spoliation of her *monasteries*, a work of sacrilegious rapacity, against which she protests to this day with the whole Catholic world—who can estimate the greatness of that loss? How many centuries it threw her back in her great work of love. But how nobly is the Church of England now *recovering* her lost ground in the establishment of religious houses, hospitals, and orphanages! Is the penitent any longer forgotten? Is the widow any longer uncared for? How have sisterhoods of charity again taken root on England's soil? marking a new era in her Church history.

And why need I dwell on the numerous missions to the heathen; the foundation of so many new sees; the reopening of Church synods; and lastly and chiefly, the *restoration* of the *daily sacrifice* in many of our churches, in a word, the revival of the dormant powers of the Church, and that in spite of the world's untiring and unscrupulous opposition. Has not enough been said to show, that the Church of England has

still the Catholic spirit; the true life of her Divine head quickening her, and fitting her perhaps to be once more the mother of saints. "Are not these things so? *men, brethren, and fathers,* HEARKEN."

N.

SERMON XI.

CHRISTIAN UNITY.

Acts ii. 1.

"They were all with one accord in one place."

Thus in loving union did the whole band of disciples—the whole Body of the Church—await the descent of the gift of the Holy Ghost. As one material body cannot be in two places at one time, so all who were of that heavenly body were waiting together for the coming of the Holy Comforter, Who was promised to them.

As they had but one will—the will of God; but one desire—the wish for God's glory; but one life—the life which was hid with Christ; so would they have but one place of dwelling. To be separated even in outward appearance from the rest of the Church would be very dangerous at such a time. One who was so parted from the rest might have lost the gift: and

this none would risk. It was true that mere bodily separation *need* not have that effect. The spirit for Whose coming they waited was none other than God Himself, and "the Lord knoweth them that are His." When the Spirit of the Lord was given to the seventy who were to be the assistants of Moses, it fell on all, even though two of them had stayed in the camp. It might have been so again. It might have been God's Will to give His Holy Spirit even to those who might be absent. But the disciples did not trust to this. They could not be sure that God would condescend to search them out. When our Lord showed Himself first to His Disciples, Thomas was absent and saw Him not. But if all were together they should be sure to be partakers of their Lord's Blessing. He had bidden them remain in the city till they received it, and He would not have thus commanded them had He not willed to give it to them all.

It will be well to attend first to the meaning of the words themselves and their application to our own circumstances; and then see what practical duties they lay upon us.

1. We read then in these words of *all* the disciples. The language of this passage is most strong and emphatic: "they were *all* with *one* accord in *one* place."

It does not leave the least room to suppose that even one was absent. They were all in a body gathered together. It was most natural that it should be so. When men expect any by whose visit they will feel themselves honoured, they do not leave him to seek them out, but go all in a body to meet him. So these, when they looked for the coming of the HOLY GHOST, came *all* of them together. Whatever, then, be the teaching of these words, belongs to all Christians. We must so interpret them as not to say that they bind some and leave others free, but we shall have to acknowledge all alike to be bound by them. The practice of the whole Church *then* is an example to the whole Church *now*, so far as circumstances will allow. It will therefore be our duty to see what the meaning of the other words is, and what their application to us. However they apply, they apply to us all—to the whole of that One Body of CHRIST to which His One Spirit was first given on the day of Pentecost.

2. The first thing that is told us of *all* the disciples is that they had one mind—one will. "They were all *with one accord* in one place." None came there who was not of one mind with CHRIST and His true followers. There was nothing to tempt them. These few had held together in the midst of trouble and shame and

the rebukes of the world, and now their joy was such as the world could not, if it would, have entered into. The world was, as it seemed, going on much as usual. Men from all nations had come together as was their wont, for the feast, and all were intent on preparing for it. The first day of the Feast was now come, and doubtless all were looking forward to take their own accustomed part in it. What might be the thoughts of some sixscore of those who had followed the Despised and Crucified JESUS could matter little to them. Their rulers had put Him to death, and since that they had heard no more about Him or His followers. Probably most had forgotten them altogether. At all events nothing had occurred to make them seek union with so despised a sect; and therefore the disciples were "all of one mind." And so must we, brethren, be of one mind and one heart. We must not have some one—some another reason for professing ourselves Christians. We must all have one mind, and that mind must be to set forth GOD'S glory. If men call themselves Christians and pretend to zeal for the Church of CHRIST only because others do the same; or because they think it respectable to do so, or expect some worldly good from it, such service will not be accepted with GOD. If any had joined himself to the disciples on

the day of Pentecost because he expected CHRIST to return and *then* set up a Kingdom in this world, they could not have been said to be "with one accord" in company with the Apostles. If we would imitate them in this we must take care that our motive for being Christians, and professing to be faithful Christians, is none other than the love of GOD.

3. But it was not enough that all should be of one mind, they were also all in one place. "They were all with one accord *in one place.*" The love of GOD was the motive for their actions, and this showed itself in the love of one another. They were not satisfied with having one purpose of action, but they kept all of them together that they might all do the same things as well as wish and intend the same. They were all to receive One Spirit, and by that Spirit to be united together in Communion: it was fit that their outward acts should set forth their spiritual state.

But how in these days are we to follow the Early Church in this respect? Now, thanks be to GOD, the grain of mustard-seed—the roomful of disciples—has spread until it includes all nations under its branches. How then can Christians now be all in one place? That one room wherein these were all gathered together represents to us that One Church of CHRIST—

His One Body—to which we are told that "the LORD added daily such as should be saved." When we read of the Apostles being all in one place, and wish to know how we may be so too, let us think that it is by being all joined together in an outward bond of union. Of course we cannot individually bring this about; that is, no one person can force all who call themselves Christians to join with him in outward fellowship, but each may do something towards it. It is required of Christians by their LORD that their love should be not *only* the love of the heart; but in some way an outward and apparent act of love; "By this," He saith, "*shall all men know* that ye are My disciples, if ye love one another." It was to be such a love that all men might see it, and from it know that they were CHRIST'S disciples. So fully was this seen and felt among the first Christians, that it was the common wonder of their enemies, to see how the Christians loved one another. But surely there is none of that manifest love, when men for slight cause separate themselves, and refuse communion with CHRIST'S Church. We are so accustomed to find ourselves in the midst of those who call themselves by the Name of CHRIST, and yet in their very manner of life, and as a necessary consequence of the state in which they have placed them-

selves, break this His new Commandment, that we need to be reminded of those things which were plain to Christians at first. They could not believe that any who wantonly separated from the One Body of CHRIST could be partakers of His One Spirit. Now men think that if they only profess love for CHRIST, they may claim their part in that Spirit of peace and love which He gave to His Church. But the first disciples, when they were waiting for this very gift—the Holy Spirit—set us a very different example, holding together, and, as their heart was one, so living together in one outward bond of union.

Thus far, then, we have tried to gain an adequate knowledge of the meaning of the words of the text. We see that they set before us the Disciples—all as one man—assembled with one purpose and motive in one place. And we see moreover, that this teaches to *all* Christians generally, the necessity of continuing, with a single eye to GOD'S glory, in faithful fellowship with the Apostles and their successors in the One Body of CHRIST. One caution may be needed here. Let it be understood that what is now or at any other time said on such subjects, is said not in judgment, but in warning. It is not meant to judge or condemn those who may have been guilty of the sin of

separation; any more than if I should set forth the sinfulness of adultery or murder, I should presume to take on me to anticipate in any individual case, the sentence of GOD'S wrath. I speak in warning to those who have been by GOD'S mercy, kept as yet from this sin; and, if any such be present, in most solemn remonstrance to those who have fallen. There is set forth to us in Holy Scripture, a most certain way of depriving ourselves of the graces of CHRIST'S Spirit, and that is by separating wilfully, or, obstinately, in spite of warning, remaining apart from the Body of CHRIST. One alone can say of any particular person that he is guilty of such crime, and His judgment is reserved till a future day. But there is the danger notwithstanding; and it is the part of Christian love to point it out in all its greatness.

4. And now let us see what each of us may learn for himself. We can none of us bring it to pass that all the members of the Christian Church should be of one mind, and have one purpose; nor can we cause all professors of the Name of CHRIST, to unite in one outward bond of love. It concerns us then to think what our part as individual Christians is.

i. First we are bidden by the example before us to search our hearts. We must put to ourselves two questions: first, whether our one

only motive for all that we do and profess, is the love of God:—and secondly, whether we do from our hearts love our brethren, as fellow members of Christ's Body.

We must inquire, in order to answer the first question, what are our reasons for coming to Church, and for making profession of a true Faith; and for calling ourselves Churchmen, and continuing outwardly in the communion of that Church into which we have once been grafted. If any of you can assign no better reason than that other people come, or that your betters or those whose opinion you value, wish you to come, then you are not assembled as those who are "with one accord," in the company of the first Disciples. I fear many come from some worldly motive. Some find the time hang heavy upon their hands, especially upon a Sunday, when their regular work is stopped, and think it will pass more quickly if they are in Church; others think it respectable to be seen in Church; others come merely from habit, having been long accustomed to come to Church. All these are bad reasons, and not the motives of the Disciples on the day of Pentecost. There is also another bad reason: and that is, when people come here to hear a sermon. This leads men to think more of other men and their own reason than of God,

for whose honour we come to Church. The reason which we ought to have, is love to GOD and a desire to obey His will in everything. We know that He desires His people to come together to worship Him, and that He has promised His especial blessing to the united prayers of His people. Therefore we should assemble here, and the same love and desire of obedience will guide *in all things* those who wish to be made like JESUS.

In like manner, we must seek to know whether we really love our brethren as we ought to love them. If we can sincerely answer that our service of GOD springs from a right motive—if we truly love GOD, we shall undoubtedly love our brethren. Still, it is necessary here to examine carefully; for the heart of man is very deceitful, and, if we do not use all means to check it, may keep us from the knowledge of what lies hid in it. One question may lead us to see that we have given a false answer to some other.

ii. But it is necessary to pass on to the other practical point. If we truly love CHRIST, we shall be deeply grieved for the divisions of His Church. We are steadfast in our own hold upon the Truth; but others too, we are sure, must have some portion of the truth which we find hard to believe or wholly neglect. We

must then be humble, as well as constant. But can we do anything to promote that oneness which we desire? certainly we can. There is one means,—and that the most powerful—which may be used alike by all. It is prayer, prayer prevails with GOD. Especially is He moved by united prayer. If then all would agree to pray daily, and in earnest for the blessing of Unity, certainly, GOD would soon remove the obstacles to its restoration. Let me then ask you all to join the Association for promoting the Unity of Christendom, promising to say daily the short Collect, which together with the LORD'S Prayer is said by many thousands of persons with this intention.

This will be one thing—what more is there which we can do? We must "seek the peace of the Church." Each may do that in his own degree, by holding the truth firmly himself, yet with patience for the errors of others, and love for themselves though they be in error. Thus did our LORD act while on earth, and thus does He act still towards us. He bears with the sinner and strives to turn him from his sin, and loves him even in the midst of it. He bore the contradiction of His countrymen, and by His warnings and reproofs, tried to turn them from their evil way; He wept over the fallen city, prayed for His murderers, gave proof of His

mercy by accepting the penitent thief even at the last hour. Let us shew like forbearance for those whom GOD suffers for a time to be in error. We dare not give up the truth; we dare not speak of it as indifferent; we must profess it openly and fearlessly whenever there is need; but we may "speak the truth in love." Unless we do so we are not, as far as we may, setting forward that state of things when we shall be "all with one accord in one place,"—the Church of GOD.

If we only bear continually in mind the great blessings offered to all in the Church,—no less than the full participation in the merits of CHRIST, and full pardon to every penitent soul through His merits—we shall not fail to strive thus to follow the example of the Disciples, by being as far as each can "of one accord," and "in one place." The Holy Spirit is One, and belongs to the One Body of CHRIST. He is a Spirit of Peace and Love. They who love not their brethren, are grieving that Holy Spirit; they that long not for the extension of the Body of CHRIST till all are members thereof, deny the LORD who hath sent us His Spirit; and they who tear themselves from that Body, or drive others from it, are, as far as they can, closing against themselves or others the channels whereby the Holy Spirit might come into their souls.

A. H. M.

SERMON XII.

THE PRAYER OF CHRIST FOR UNITY.[1]

S. John xvii. 20—23.

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are One: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me."

It is impossible for any of us to hear these words without being most deeply impressed by them, and having very solemn thoughts, and when we think of the present state of the Christian world, very sad and anxious thoughts. This chapter is indeed one of the most striking, and one of the deepest meaning in the whole

[1] Preached at S. Nicholas, Chislehurst, Advent, 1857.

Bible; it contains the great prayer of our Blessed Lord for His Apostles and for His Church, for "all who should believe on Him through their word," for all at this present time, for us; for this parish, for the Church of this land, for the Church in the various kingdoms of this world, for all indeed who profess and call themselves Christians. In order to see the awful solemnity which attaches to this prayer, let us first consider the time, and place, and circumstances, under which it was uttered. That it is a prayer of Christ for His Church, is enough to give it solemnity, but the time and place yet greatly heighten that. Surely nothing could or should impress our hearts more. It was night—that night the most important and the most solemn of all the hours that the departed sun has cast upon the earth. It was the last that the Son of Man was to spend on earth before He suffered on the cross. He was with His disciples in the upper chamber at Jerusalem. Jesus Christ had already instituted the new Paschal Supper, which was to take the place of the old Passover—the Sacrament of the Holy Communion of His Body and Blood, had been just ordained, to be the figure, and the means, and the bond of spiritual union. He had given those great gifts of life and union to His disciples; they were one, one in the pre-

sence of CHRIST. Add to this, that our LORD had just given His last counsel to His disciples; the three preceding chapters are, so to speak, His death-bed address, the last dying words of the SON of GOD; and after He had finished them, He prayed. His prayer was to give effect to His words, to bind this His latest counsel upon their souls, to fix the thoughts of His divine Heart, the desire of His divine Soul, the intention of His divine will upon their inmost hearts, that what He prayed, that they might strive to be and to do! There then, in the upper chamber, at the hour of midnight, sitting at the table with His disciples, the mystical emblems of His Body and Blood spread out before Him; JESUS lifting up His eyes to heaven, and His voice and His holy hands to GOD the FATHER, offers this great parting prayer for His Church. And is there any one idea which seems, more than any other, prominent in that prayer? Are there any words by which we can gather what thought or what desire *especially* filled the soul of the SAVIOUR? In answer, I would say, that we may surely conclude that there was one thought and one desire uppermost in His Soul, and that it was Unity, the Unity of His people, the Unity of His holy Church. This surely filled at that solemn hour the Redeemer's soul! We may,

without presumption, gather this most clearly from the words of the prayer. Our LORD constantly and urgently supplicates that His people may be ONE. He is not satisfied with wishing it once, or twice, or thrice, but again and again, with only the slightest variation of language, He offers the same prayer. You have only to read the words to be convinced of this.

In that which we may call the declaratory part of the prayer, He lays down the great truth, that the Church is different from the world. "I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them that Thou hast given me, for they are Thine." For the world, as such, He here prays not, He only intreats for the Church.

2. What then is the first petition. It is this. "Holy FATHER, keep through Thine own Name those that Thou hast given Me, that they may be one as We are." He prays for the Apostles; He declares, that while He had been with them, He had kept them all united, an unbroken band, a holy brotherhood. But He is now going away; by His departure the visible keystone is to be taken from the arch of unity, and He prays that GOD the FATHER would supply its place by the binding influence of His grace and power, and the HOLY SPIRIT, and still keep them so.

3. Having prayed for His disciples, He extends His view to the Church which they should form. He looks down the stream of ages, "to all who should believe," &c. He sees the converts made by His Apostles become a growing Church. He sees the Church floating on the waves of time, amid generation after generation. It is a vessel bearing a precious cargo of power, and peace, and healing, and salvation. It is the new temple, an outward and visible building, containing an inward glory. It is to be like "a city set on a hill," to attract the notice, the admiration, the hearts of mankind, that all might be won by the influence of the grace and power of CHRIST, shown forth in its visible unity and in its manifold graces. But He sees danger within it, and these dangers His calm eye also sees, will immensely increase the difficulties which are without. These dangers arise chiefly from disunion, and He prays for union. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on Me, through their word, that they all may be One, as Thou FATHER art in Me and I in Thee." The term which He uses is striking; it implies the simplest, strictest Unity, and even more than this, it implies absolute Oneness, which we only see in that which has a perfect outward form. We speak of one man, one woman, one family, one

city, one nation, because there is an outward form which makes the one individual. Now our LORD at least implies that His Church should be One in the same sense, in which Jerusalem is called "a city at unity in itself;" that His Church should be One in as true and strict a sense, as a city which is walled all round is One city.

4. And He adds to His prayer for the oneness of His Church, an interpretation, in the way of prayer, what that oneness should be. No words can express more perfect unity, no words can be deeper; they are these most remarkable expressions, "That they all may be One, as Thou FATHER art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be One in Us; that they may be One, even as We are One; I in them and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in One." Words of wondrous signification! Thus the union or oneness of Christians in the one Church, was evidently intended to be a picture, and image, and likeness, of the union of the FATHER and the SON. When therefore divisions abound in the Christian body, as they do among us, we commit two great evils; we first rend the Body of CHRIST, which is His Church, and secondly, we destroy the visible picture of the Oneness of the eternal Trinity.

When also we remember that there is a single

particular in which the FATHER and the SON are separate, and that is in person, this separation makes the Oneness of the Godhead only a more perfect representation of the Unity which ought to exist in the Church, for the Church is one great body, containing many persons, all of which have their separate and peculiar habits, pursuits, dispositions, trials, graces; but there is one point in which they should be one in visible unity, fellowship, and communion in CHRIST'S Holy Church. After considering all this, how can it be really thought that all that is intended is only an unity of love? had it been so, I believe the words "united in heart," and not simply the word *one* would have been used, nor would the most solemn comparison of the unity of the Godhead have been employed.

We can only believe one thing, that our LORD prayed His Church might never be divided. He looked upon it as one family, and prayed that it might always continue so. He looked upon it, not as a number or variety of bodies to be united, but as already one and a whole,—one ark, one vessel, launched forth on the waves of time, exposed to the danger of being broken and divided; and He prayed to His FATHER that the threatened evil of disunion might not arise, but that it might continue One, and never be split or broken asunder. And He

presses the subject even further. He looked for a result upon the world of this visible unity of His Church. He expected and prayed it might conduce to the conversion of the world, "that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

Now when we pause and deeply reflect on these solemn words, upon the extraordinary character of the oneness for which CHRIST prayed, that as the FATHER and the SON are absolutely one, one in heart, one in will, one in act, one in essence of being, one in the deepest, highest, fullest sense that can be imagined, even thus should His Church on earth be united. When we have impressed all this upon our own hearts, and try to follow the deep intention and will of our LORD, is it not plain that when He offered up that His prayer, it was His desire that all His disciples, i.e., all the members of His holy Church, should be joined in the closest bonds in which it is possible for human beings to be bound? Then when we look abroad into the world, whether in our parish, in the Church of this land, among all Christians, when we see the great portions of Christendom, the Roman Catholic, the Greek or Eastern Church, and that large part of Christendom in union with the Church of England, when we see all divided, the one from the other; and the bodies of Lutherans and Calvinists, and

the many almost countless sects, all opposed to each other, and all opposed to the Church:

We ask in sorrow this question—

Is this the will of CHRIST? Is this pleasing to Him? Is this the kind of unity which we can truly in our hearts believe that JESUS CHRIST prayed to GOD the FATHER to grant Him for His Church? It is impossible that it should be, for it is not oneness, it is on the contrary division—division of heart, division of action, division of worship, division of body. CHRIST prayed for unity, "that they may be one, even as we are one, as Thou FATHER art in Me and I in Thee." If it is not what CHRIST prayed for, but the contrary, it must be most displeasing and grievous to Him, that the fruit of that prayer should not only be lost, but that instead of unity, there should be strife, discord, division. This is not, cannot be His will.

And now to bring all this to a practical conclusion. I wish to consider with you, can nothing be done to remedy this? There is in the minds of most true Christians, a desire for unity; there are indeed some who are so accustomed to the sad spectacle of disunion and division, that they consider absolute union, the union of all men in one body, such as the Church, to be an impossibility; yet the desire for union cannot be restrained. Some feeling

this keenly, are led to seek union with the Church of Rome, (a church that claims to herself the title of the one Holy Catholic Church, and yet excommunicates millions of her fellow Christians)—a certain union may be thereby gained—but apart from all other considerations, I cannot at all see how the Truth of GOD, or the unity of His Church, can be advanced by that course. How can it advance the unity of the whole Church, the unity of Christendom, when conditions of union are enforced by one portion, which were once unknown to the Christian world.

Humanly speaking, the idea of a reunion would seem a fanciful imagination; I know well that perhaps many would, I will not say ridicule the proposition, but think it impossible or hopeless. But yet the words of CHRIST remain, the prayer of CHRIST remains, the will and desire of CHRIST remains. Surely then, under any circumstances the faithful, all who love their LORD, are bound to do their utmost, not to rest content with disunion, but to forward if possible, the blessed work of the reunion of Christendom, however little they may see how to do it, or however faint may be the vision. There may be difficulties in the way of union, they may appear in our eyes impossible to be overcome, but let us remember the Incarnation of our LORD, and

His prayer of intercession; prayer united with the thought and intercession of His prayer will be heard; only let the deep prayer of faith ascend to the ALMIGHTY, and be the difficulties what they may to our eye, that prayer may and will avail some time, as and when GOD will. "The things that are impossible with men, are possible with GOD."

To forward this object in some degree, I wish to state to you, that an Association has been formed to promote prayer for unity. . . . .[1] I think this is so simple, so practical, so real in its object, and that object so great, so entirely consistent with the prayer and will of our Blessed LORD, that I earnestly hope many of you will unite in what is here proposed. No one is required thereby to compromise or sacrifice a single principle; it is simply to unite in faith, in prayer, for one object of the gravest importance and the deepest blessing. I shall be glad if all who will join in this good work, will give me their names, that they may be added to the list. "If union is strength," there must above all be strength and blessing upon united prayer.

"If two of you shall agree on earth touching anything," &c.

If in case of two or three, what in the case of

[1] Here the objects and proposals of the Association were stated.

thousands, ten thousands? Why should we not act as a body, as a whole Church join in offering such a prayer? Is it too much to hope, that with GOD'S blessing, this good work should spread through the greater part of Christendom? If persons would once hope for union, and pray for it, it would go far towards its accomplishment. But whatever may be the result, our plain duty, our most glad duty, is to work for union, and to leave the rest to GOD. If any will do as suggested,—and I do hope, and believe, that many will do so,—no one will regret in this life having made it the subject of daily intercession,—and hereafter, when death may come, the recollection that they had done so,—that they had worked to fulfil the prayer of our beloved LORD, will be one of the most blissful of their latest remembrances.

F. H. M.

SERMON XIII.

CHRIST'S DEATH-BED SERMON DISREGARDED BY CHRISTIANS.

S. John xiii. 34, 35.

"A new Commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another: as I have loved you, that ye also love one another: by this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another."

It has frequently been made a question, whether this or that Christian ordinance is of Divine appointment, and its non-observance has been thought to be satisfactorily excused, when it has been proved to be grounded upon the practice of the primitive Church, rather than upon Scripture. Infant baptism, confirmation, episcopal ordination, even the precise mode of celebrating the Lord's Supper, are among these disputed points, because it is alleged, that the language of Scripture is not express about them. Baptism and the Lord's Supper, on the

other hand, though variously administered, are universally recognized as of Divine institution, because we have the commands of CHRIST full and explicit, in either case, for their observance. Moreover, each institution is noticed to have taken place under unusually solemn circumstances; the LORD's Supper immediately preceding His Passion; Baptism immediately preceding His Ascension. The words, "Do this in remembrance of Me," as it were summing up the mysteries of the Incarnation. The words, "Baptising them in the Name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST," as it were summing up the mysteries of the Godhead. Far be it from my intention to depreciate the importance of either of these august rites, but it is in the very nature of Sacraments, that they serve but as means to the end. And certainly, looking at CHRIST's own words, it seems impossible to deny but that there is nothing in the form of institution, whether of Baptism or of the Holy Eucharist, that proclaims their superior importance, when compared with the stress of language, the solemnity of circumstance, the earnestness of appeal, both to GOD and man, that attends the delivery of this new commandment—of all commandments under the Gospel, the most unequivocally enjoined; and of all commandments

under the Gospel, the most systematically unheeded in these our days. By the very time chosen for its enactment, its relation to the Sacrament of the LORD'S Supper, is made doubly clear. The whole of the Disciples had communicated, but it was not till the one unworthy communicant had "gone out," that our LORD opened His lips in that sublime burst of feeling, which might be fitly called "His death-bed sermon." His first words were to give GOD glory—in the next sentence, He forewarns His disciples, that they are about to lose Him; then immediately, without further preface, as though it were to be the one thing that they should do in His absence, as though it were the one thing uppermost in His own Heart, to be impressed upon them, He begins, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." And this is His theme, not for one, two, or three verses, but for two more consecutive chapters. It is enforced by cogent and by tender arguments; it is eventually pleaded for, in by far the longest and most earnest of His recorded prayers. We shall analyse each of the topics which He has employed, and in their order. First and foremost is the consideration—a proof which neither Baptism nor the Holy Eucharist could supply with equal

certainty, that they would be known "By all men to be His disciples," if they had "love one to another." It is indeed as though He had contemplated these latter days—which angels and heathen alike must regard with perplexity—when they see men who have been baptized, and who frequent the LORD'S Supper, regarding each other as deadly foes; proclaiming their enmity, while affecting to be preaching each a truer Gospel than the other. "In My FATHER'S house are many mansions;" as though He had said, "Here is a new reason why you should love one another on earth; you will all live together in heaven for ever. How can you be happy with those whom you do not love? How can you expect to be able to love those in heaven, from whom you have been estranged on earth? O! that Catholics and Protestants, Churchmen, and Dissenters from the Church, nevertheless aspiring to be followers of CHRIST, one and all, would reflect upon what is to be their future, and whom they expect to meet in the place in which they hope to pass eternal life. Can they hope for happiness where they are associated with any whom they do not love, and can they hope to be loved there, by those whom they have hated and opposed here? Or do they think that heaven will be limited rigidly to one set of Christians—of baptized

Christians that is—and that all others, however much they may have loved CHRIST, and conformed their lives to His precepts, and sighed to be with Him in His kingdom, will be excluded from it? If they will not consider themselves refuted in those impressive words, "In My FATHER'S house are *many* mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you," let them at all events attend to what follows. In the commencement of the next chapter, our LORD returns from dwelling upon things to come, that He may open the eyes of His disciples to realities just dawning, and at that time as little dreamt of as life beyond the grave. "I am the Vine, ye are the branches; as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in Me." Whatever unity is here pourtrayed between the vine and its branches, must necessarily co-exist between each particular branch and its fellows. How completely has this important truth been overlooked; but how otherwise can the analogy be for a moment sustained? Divide the branches from each other, so that their continuity shall be broken off, and the sap, which is their life, shall no longer circulate from one to the other, and their connexion is immediately severed from the parent tree; they can no more exist in iso-

lation from each other, than from it. The condition of their inherence in the trunk, is their living connexion and coherence one with another. We hear a great deal of the Catholic Church and its branches. In the ordinary sense in which it is used, this is a pure misnomer; in strict truth, in its ideal character, the Catholic Church is but a synonyme for our LORD'S Body, and nothing independent or apart from it. He, and He only, is the true Vine; all branches that abide in Him, *must* have fellowship with each other; any schism that enters between them, must necessarily affect, in a greater or a less degree, their communion with Him. Judge the divided Churches of existing Christendom by this rule, and what follows? That so far as they have cut themselves off from each other precisely, they have cut themselves off from CHRIST; that if they have any part in Him still, it is owing to the fact, that alienated, isolated, estranged from each other as they have chosen to become, there is still some hidden link of sympathy and intercommunion between them all, unknown to themselves, in spite of themselves, by which alone life still trickles to them invisibly, through half-closed, half-intercepted channels, from the parent stock. They more than half confess it by their very demeanour, like wayward children convicting

themselves, and little dreaming how patent their perversity has become to all others. Where is there a body upon earth called, or calling itself the Catholic Church in these days? The Church of England claims to be no more than Anglo-Catholic; the Church in communion with Rome, unequivocally professes her title to be Roman Catholic; the Church of the East styles herself Orthodox. The disciples of Irving, finding the term vacant, as one might say, appropriated it—a plain proof that till then, it had been in abeyance, and that nobody claimed it as their own. But why dwell any longer upon metaphors, when there was never any commandment expressed in plainer English? "If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love, even as I have kept My FATHER'S commandments and abide in His love .... This is My commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you." There can be no mistake about the meaning of these words. Fellowship in the love of CHRIST is made to depend upon the keeping of His commandments. His commandment of commandments is, that we should love one another. His own continuance in His FATHER'S love, is adduced as resting upon the same foundations. Is it not mockery then, for any baptized Christians to affect to be in possession of CHRIST, that live in habitual indifference

to this, the greatest of His commandments—and not the greatest only, but the one of all others that was based upon His own example? "That ye love one another;" not with a chance love, but "as I have loved you;" not merely through life, but even unto death, and in death. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." You therefore that would abide in My love, must keep My commandments; you that would keep My commandments, must love one another as I have loved you. You that would love one another as I have loved you, must be willing to lay down your lives for each other, as I am about to lay down My life for you. How is the logical sequence to be avoided? How are Greeks, Romans, and Anglicans, to be excused, if one may so speak, without irreverence, for turning it all into so much nonsense, when compared with facts? The logic of our LORD's words is love; what is, and has been for centuries the logic of facts? The spectacle that we see before us with our own eyes, or in the page of history, is that of Christians animated with quite as much hate for each other, as our LORD had prescribed love—burning, imprisoning, torturing, banishing, anathematizing, calumniating, avoiding each other, though belonging to the same country, to the same neighbourhood—

brought up at the same home. The prophecy, that "a man's foes should be of his own household," was never more literally, more constantly, more completely fulfilled amongst any set of men, amongst pagans, amongst savages, than it has been amongst Christians—amongst those who frequent the very Supper of the LAMB—they pretend to have separated or become estranged on both sides, from zeal for some one of the commandments or ordinances of our LORD, while by their very act of separation, the greatest, the plainest, the most earnestly inculcated, and recommended by His own example, the most distinctively Christian of all His commandments, has been trampled under foot. And as a matter of course, Christians that have ceased to love each other, have become lovers, rather than haters of the world. The world no longer regards them as aliens; the world no longer hates them; the world sees them adopt its own fashions with infinite satisfaction—they fight and quarrel now like other people, or even more bitterly than other people. They are no longer the stern protest against wars, and fightings, and back-bitings, and jealousies, and enmities, that they used to be; and the world has adopted them into its own ranks, and made them sharers of its good things. In exact proportion as they have learned to hate, rather than love each

other, they have come to be loved, rather than hated by the world.

Here once more we see the tenor of our LORD's words reversed. Christians of our days unquestionably love the world, far more than they love each other; their "vested interests" are, in reality, the greatest of all obstacles to their reunion; they think that they have Christianized the world, when in fact the world has so far utterly un-Christianized them. Priests and Bishops tremble at the very idea of a reunion of Churches, for fear they should be mulcted of their revenues; for fear others should be admitted to a share of them. Is not this the thought that is uppermost in their minds, when projects for reunion are brought forward? "These things I command you, that ye love one another." This is precisely the commandment that Christians have come to observe least. "If the world hate you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you." This is a danger, respecting which they never had less cause for alarm. Or, to take another point of view, to which our LORD is continually recurring, what is to be said of that supernatural aid which was promised to them, not only for their consolation, but for the better keeping of His commandments? Where is the proof of its existence in the collective Church, as things

go now? "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you; but the Comforter, which is the HOLY GHOST, Whom the FATHER will send in My Name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

Now the very thing on which our LORD insisted most, is what seems brought to our remembrance least of all in these days. Is it that the HOLY GHOST no longer fulfils His mission; is it that His influence has been withdrawn from amongst us? There is every reason to think that in proportion as we have ceased to love one another, we have been abandoned by the Spirit of CHRIST. Will any one undertake to prove the divisions of Christendom to be one of the fruits of the Spirit? Was that glorious hymn, "Veni Creator Spiritus," ever intended to be a war-cry? With what face could the Blessed Paraclete be invoked in the cause of schism? Is it not rather to be attributed to His counteracting and benign influence, that there is still a hidden agreement amongst the good men of all communions, in serving CHRIST and preparing themselves for heaven? Books written on these subjects, sermons preached on these subjects, may be read by all; and it is the last thing that we think of as we read them, to what church their author belonged. A holy

man is a holy man in all communions—a living proof of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. What a contradiction to His indwelling, is our unholy attitude towards each other—how systematically do we neutralize the main object which our Lord had in sending Him—how systematically do we neutralize His blessed influence upon our own souls.

And that prayer, that ineffably sublime prayer, the appeal from earth to heaven, as if our Lord foresaw how utterly slighted that appeal would be by earth—"the supplication and strong crying," now, if ever, that He "offered up unto Him that was able to save Him from death," had this been His petition—instead of breathing any thing for Himself in those awful moments, was it not made, not merely for His own immediate followers, but "for them also, who should believe on Him through their word, that they all may be one, as Thou Father art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." How have we interposed between this sublime prayer and its fulfilment; would any person, looking at the state of Christendom in the present day, believe that the Son of God had, on the eve of His death, prayed that its Unity might resemble that of the Godhead?

Is it not notorious, that the world is at this very moment doubting of the Divine mission of CHRIST, mainly in consequence of the divisions of Christendom? As if it were not enough that we should have caused GOD to deny that prayer, we have actually furnished man with strong grounds for disbelieving in the mission of Him Who made it. Our LORD had said repeatedly, that His followers would be known to be His, by no surer criterion, than by their Unity; and the divisions of Christendom are looked upon by the world, as the surest proof that our LORD could not have been what He claimed to be. Could we be but removed from earth, to some point high above the contagion of all sublunary influences, from whence, like angels, we might look down, and take account of what is going on in all parts of the world at a glance, without being ourselves implicated or compromised in any portion of it, how astonished should we be to contemplate the false position which we had been previously occupying as followers of CHRIST, looking back upon it in all its aspects, in its full length and breadth. No matter to what portion of Christendom we had belonged, we should then recognize that we had been systematically violating the plainest, the most beneficent, the most positive, of all the commandments of CHRIST, for the

sake of maintaining one or more fine-drawn distinctions respecting the expression of doctrine, respecting the administration of the Sacraments, respecting the mode of Church government, all of which our LORD had, in fact, left open questions, and for which, though there may be a right and wrong about them in some sense, He never intended any one of His own express commandments to be set aside.

In leaving power to His Church to legislate upon points undecided by Him, it was never His intention that His Church should set up any part of her legislation in opposition to His commandments. Having given His disciples commandment to love one another, He never intended that His Church should emperil or render its observance impossible, by the making of any laws of her own, calculated to stir up strife, or estrange Christians from one another. How many points are there not, on which Christians are divided, which we should then see to be purely the effect of national idiosyncrasies, or local prejudices; on such points therefore, nothing like conformity should have been pressed. How many points should we not then see to be made up of mere words, inventions of some school of philosophy which, while many dissented from, a majority upheld, but which in reality, we should then see to be

no more essential parts of the doctrine sought to be embodied in them, than our own clothes are of us. On such points it should have sufficed to have contended for the true doctrine, rather than for its expression. How persuaded should we then be, that Christendom was divided for no other reason, than because its rulers had subordinated a plain command of CHRIST to their own decrees. Had it been their first care to preserve corporate Unity, there would never have been discord of any kind in the Church for long. Disputes might have arisen, but they never would have disturbed the general peace.

It has been just by these means, that the history of our own happy country has been by the blessing of Providence, developed. Our own sage legislators have measured every thing by the rule, which Aristotle says is indispensable to the well being of every community, namely, by what tends to maintain its constitution (τὸ σῶζον τὴν πολιτείαν). They have set their faces resolutely against all unconstitutional measures, however seductive; they have borne with abuses, they have been illogical, obstructive, old fashioned, but they have steadily refused to deviate from fundamental principles. Thanks to them, England is still in our own times a united country; had the Church been equally wise in her generation, she would never have

been a divided Church; she would never have allowed any one principle to be pushed so far as to undermine her Unity; she would have clung to her Unity, as we have done to our constitution, and the consequence would have been, that her children would have continued in all important respects, to be of one mind. Divided, alienated, and bitterly opposed as they are, their differences have multiplied and intensified a hundredfold beyond what they were, when Unity was first dissolved. Each has run its own course in opposite directions.

But of all sights, the most singular that would meet our gaze, would be this, that schism had not only begotten schism, but unity—a doubtful offspring indeed, judging from its parentage. Churches have quarrelled and separated, but the very principle on which they had parted, was the principle they most eschewed, when they had achieved a separate existence themselves; they have therefore supplied evidence against their own acts, and become their own accusers. They had dissolved Catholic unity, but to cohere at all amongst themselves, they found that they must substitute unity of some kind or other in its place. Instinct warned them against any farther schism, as suicidal; and hence, though divided from each other, each became doubly jealous of any further

division amongst its own adherents. Thus, Latins became more Latin than ever, and Greeks more Greek; each rallied round its own centre the more obstinately, now that common centre had been abandoned, till at length Patriarchs on both sides became Popes.

National churches have been compelled to act on the same principle ever since the Reformation. Creeds and tests have multiplied—membership has been made doubly close—sects have undoubtedly split up into sects again; but each new sect, in its commencement at all events, is a much more closely united whole, than the larger community from which it parted. We need only turn to the sects that have separated themselves from the Church of England, in proof of all this. Christendom has most wantonly broken our LORD'S principal commandment in its collective capacity; but its divided communities find that they cannot escape from observing it amongst themselves, and thereby becoming their own accusers. His commandment was, that all Christians should love one another, and remain one compact body to the end of time. Now what they have refused to do in the aggregate, they feel obliged to do in their self-established sects. It is, in fact, just what happened 4000 years ago in a parallel case. Man was commanded to worship

the God Who made him, and he refused; his instincts compelled him to worship something, so he commenced worshipping idols, in other words, the work of his own hands.

Let us, if we can, from our eyrie of observation, endeavour to trace the divisions of Christendom to their true source, for by so doing, we may perhaps discover their cure. Let us discard all minor controversies, all ethnological considerations, all Church and State entanglements. Were these removed to-morrow, Christendom might breathe more freely in its respective parts, but coalesce it could not, humanly speaking, as one body, except under one visible Head. It might be Catholic, that is to say, extending over the whole world, as a mere aggregate of Christian communities, each having its own usages and creeds; it could not be one in any corporate sense, without admitting, to some extent, what is called the principle of centralization. Were every lord-lieutenant of a county to be independent of the crown, England would consist of as many nations as there are counties. Were Scotland and Ireland governed by their own parliaments and their own kings once more, the united kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland would be at an end. It was in very early days, that we expressed our preference for a monarchy over a heptarchy. On more

mature experience, we decided that we could never be a thoroughly united people, while Scotland and Ireland had their separate legislative assemblies. Moreover, we have learnt to see, that this principle of centralization, applied in moderation, does not in the least prevent due local self-government. Every English county manages its own affairs with the utmost independence; and its magistrates are only then called to order, when they offend against the common weal. It is true, that we have not to look far, to see this principle of centralization carried out to the destruction of all local liberties and provincial interests. But surely, thus forewarned, we shall not be likely to wish for it, or allow of it, in its excess. It would be no less rash, however, to quarrel with a good institution, because it has been, or may be, abused.

If we turn to the history of the Church, we shall find that as long as it revolved round a common centre, it can always be treated as a whole. There were just as many nationalities included in it then, as now; there were perhaps not fewer controversies respecting doctrine and discipline; there were perhaps equally delicate complications between the Church and the empire. Still the history of Christendom was then as the history of a single people, of one state; there were constant movements, endless

activity, in all parts of it; but they were united, and not disjointed efforts: encouraged, or kept in check, by the central authority. It was not that uniformity of rites or usages prevailed, far from it; it was that no amount of diversity, in any of these respects, could produce estrangement, while the principle of subordination to a common centre, was maintained inviolate. It was in a fatal spirit of infatuation, both as regards its own interests, as well as those of collective Christendom, that the See—to which, from a multitude of considerations, all had come, and at length had agreed, to appeal—aspired to become more to Christendom than the last appeal; and from constitutional monarchy to advance to despotism. The principle of local self-government was infringed upon, that the principle of centralization might be exalted beyond its due. I am not saying that all this was a deliberate or violent act on the part of Rome; I am not saying that external events and unforeseen emergencies in the affairs of nations, had not a great share in bringing it about; I am only here concerned in shewing that it was a suicidal act, dividing Christendom, instead of intensifying its collective unity. For there is a point beyond which human nature cannot be strained in its relations to the Church, any more than in its civil obligations; just as

in the physical world, there is a point where attraction ends and repulsion begins. The Eastern Church was content to admit the primacy of Rome, till a supremacy was claimed; from that time forth she has preferred isolation rather than admit even a primacy—Mark what followed—the withdrawal of the East from communion with Rome, might have been supposed to have had the effect of a warning to the latter, to moderate her claims over the rest of Christendom, that still looked up to her as their common head. Did it read any thing like that lesson? Did not Rome push her supremacy over the West only the more imperiously and obstinately, because it had been disowned in the East, till at length the West also rose in schism? Nothing can be clearer than that this was the one real grievance that provoked the Reformation, and that it was not till after the disrupture had been effected, that doctrinal differences attained the prominence which they have occupied ever since. For the same reason they would once more become secondary, could this one point be re-arranged in its pristine integrity, and subscribed to by the whole Church. For who does not see that this is the one thing for which, all who have ever abandoned it, have been endeavouring to devise some adequate substitute. The majority, indeed, sooner than

part with it, have preferred acquiescing in it, even in its excesses. But what has been the course of those, who for its excesses, its manifold abuses, have shaken it off, and endeavoured to devise some better, or as they have fondly expressed it, some more primitive form of government for themselves? Have any two of them been able to agree what that true primitive form was; or rather has not each one but gone down a step regularly in the series, till at length the last was obliged to acquiesce in no form at all, and take refuge in ecclesiastical anarchy?

The Greeks were the first to separate; what was their substitute? Patriarchs. The Church of England followed, and what has been her's? Bishops. Lutherans and Calvinists, and what has been theirs? Presbyters. Wesleyans, Baptists, Independents, what has been theirs? Laymen! See how strangely systematic the declension has been, till at length the goal has been attained in no church at all—nothing but lay administration—no claim to any regularly appointed ministry. See too what has been the result of the best of these deflections—a purely national, or local Church, independent of any common tie, but that of the civil power. See some of the many incongruities that have followed from it. The Episcopal Church of

Scotland, though in every point of doctrine coinciding with the Churches of England and Ireland, has been made distinct from them by law. The Churches of Russia and Constantinople, though professing the closest intercommunion, are found, the one willing to accept the orders of the Church of England as valid, the other not even accepting its baptisms. See too, what has come to be the highest court of appeal, even in matters relating to doctrine, in the Church of England. Is there the smallest guarantee that its judges will, in giving their decision, pay the slightest heed to the opinions of the rest of Christendom? Did they consult the heads of other Churches, before pronouncing in the Gorham or Denison cases; and have we the faintest idea whether their decisions in those celebrated cases may not be so utterly repugnant to the feelings, for instance, of the Greek Churches, that they have built up additional buttresses to the wall of separation already existing between the British Churches and them?

In the same way did the Greek Churches consult the Church of England before they passed their Canons of Bethlehem; or were the Churches of England, Russia, and Constantinople, consulted before the Church of Rome pronounced in favour of the Immaculate Con-

ception? Once divided, each portion of Christendom has gone on in its own way, given vent to its own fancies, multiplied differences between it and all other Churches, instead of checking or removing them—almost set up a faith of its own. Think what checks the Churches of England and of the East would have been upon each other, as well as upon Rome, had they remained united; there is not one of them whose legislation would not have been widely different from what it has been. Consciences on all sides would have been spared the XXXIX Articles, the Creed of Pope Pius, and the Confession of Faith of the Greek Church. Think how immeasurably superior a state of things it would be, were there one supreme court of appeal, neither lay, nor civil, but ecclesiastical, in all matters affecting Christian doctrine, for entire Christendom; so that no part of it could ever introduce into its creeds, any deviation of importance from the common standard. Think of the blessing of finding a Church in every land, in which every stranger might find a home, and claim the rights of brotherhood from the native hierarchy! That would be true Catholic communion in the strictest sense, and would once more exhibit Christendom in the form of one Catholic and undivided Church.

Let us not hesitate to look this our unquestionable dilemma full in the face, and be deterred by no short-sighted or obsolete prejudices from approaching in heart to its true remedy. There is one See, to which, in former days, Christendom was wont to carry its appeals for the solution of any question, which local authorities had a difficulty in deciding, or had decided wrongly. We need not inquire too scrupulously, when or how such a practice grew up; whether recourse was had to that See upon antecedent grounds, or whether it was, as S. Bernard has emphatically stated, from pure motives of expediency. Still less practical would it be, to spend our time in inquiring whether some other See might not be selected that would do equally well, and excite less prejudice. The British Bishops, in their celebrated overtures to the Eastern Church, under Peter the Great, proposed Jerusalem as a common centre. The Greeks returned for answer, that the order of precedence had been laid down once for all, in ancient times, and that no departure from it should ever receive their sanction. Would the Churches in communion with Rome, be likely to prove more pliable? Prescription is always a hard thing to get over, but when it is prescription of above 1500 years, and supported by facts by no means mythic, it

has become, humanly speaking, irresistible; so that we have in reality, but two points to consider. 1. Whether there is any one thing that could be supposed more conducive to the unity of the Church, than that it should have a common centre; and 2ndly, that this principle of centralization should be so accepted, as to preclude the slightest infringement upon the rights of local jurisdiction. There is every reason to believe that Rome would not refuse to become the centre of Christendom once more upon these terms, namely, of being again recognized all over Christendom, as the supreme court of appeal. And why should the Church of England fear to appeal in extreme cases, to the judgment of a Christian Bishop, acknowledged, on the lowest hypothesis, to be "primus inter pares?" in other words, to rank first amongst his brethren. On the lowest hypothesis, surely, he would be more likely to decide correctly between true and false doctrine, than the Privy Council; and in these days, finally, need it be feared that he could ever assume more power than our own laws accorded? for it would of course form the basis of negotiations, that there should be stringent international laws passed, regulating these appeals. Then, even if we distrusted placing ourselves under concordats with the rest of Europe, we might at all events

feel quite certain, that any terms acceded to by the Russo-Greek Churches, on the subject of appeals, would be such as would never endanger the liberties of the Church of England.

There is but one objection, I conceive, that can be made to all this, and I meet it openly; it is, that the Pope is, "that man of sin," mentioned by S. Paul, and the See of Rome, the "harlot" of the Apocalypse. Strange to say, I should read in those words, were it certain that they were to be so interpreted, which it is not, the strongest proof of the Œcumenical rights of the Roman See. I say boldly, that I should consider them even stronger evidence of its title to be the metropolis of Christendom, than is to be found in the well-known addresses of our LORD to S. Peter, recorded in the first and last of the Gospels. If Jerusalem, the city of peace, the city of David, the metropolis of the twelve tribes, GOD'S chosen habitation, could be addressed by the inspired Prophets of the Old Testament as "Aholibah, the sister of Sodom, adulteress, harlot, the bloody city," ought we to be surprised to find the same strange paradox reiterated under the New; and that what had too often become, through man, the centre of abominations, had been originally designed by GOD to be the centre of Unity, the Jerusalem of His appointment, under

the Gospel? Are we in fact any better ourselves as men, we that would throw stones? Have we not been all made temples of the Holy Ghost from childhood, and how often have we become temples of Belial in our prime, and scarce purified ourselves in old age. As for Churches, it might be still more difficult to determine, which of them should cast the first stone. The Providence of God has preserved, and purified by adversity, the ancient metropolis of Christendom. Let us not fear to rebuild there the temple that is in ruins: no other site could be so well chosen. Grotius, Puffendorf, Leibnitz, Thorndike, Laud, Bramhall, Wake, the modern Churches of the East, the primitive Canons of East and West, all attest the primacy that belongs to that See. Our own instincts—our own instincts, if we would but probe them thoroughly and dispassionately, will convince us that there cannot possibly be a Catholic Church upon earth, without a Catholic head. At present, all is chaos and confusion. We are told, in the creeds, of a Catholic Church, but when we look for it around us, we find that it exists but upon paper; not one of the divided Churches lays claim to the title as it stands in the ancient creeds. We hear the dogma, "no salvation out of the Church," ("nulla extra ecclesiam salus,") bandied about on all sides,

but what, in reality, can be its meaning in these days? In the age that enuntiated it for the first time—in that age, there was but one Church, and Christendom was co-extensive with it—it was like saying, that there was no salvation for any but believers in CHRIST. Is there any one Church now that is co-extensive with Christendom, or are the terms of communion in any one Church, what they used to be, when the Catholic Church was One? It is true, that by some curious fatality, the practice of each Church shrinks from carrying out its theory; for there is no Church, I believe, in Christendom, where communion is ordered to be denied to any who present themselves for it, at the time of its celebration, but notorious evil-doers. Accordingly, the disciples of Irving, are found communicating in all Churches of Christendom, East and West, whenever it suits them. I do not quote this practice as unexceptionable, which it is not; but I do quote it as a witness against all Churches alike—I cannot but consider all Churches equally guilty before GOD, of the breach of a positive commandment of CHRIST, of wilful antagonism to the one petition of His dying prayer.

All our differences of doctrine and discipline, sink into nothingness before that inexpressibly solemn appeal; all our zeal for the observance

of His other commandments, can never compensate for our deliberate and entire violation of the greatest of them all. In cutting ourselves off from each other, we have so far cut ourselves off from CHRIST: in turning away from that commandment, which the HOLY GHOST was designed to "bring to our remembrance," we have made His Spirit so far inoperative. Hence it is, that people are continually asking themselves the question, whether they are in the true Church or not, a question that could never have occurred to them, when there was but one Church to belong to; when the Vine and its branches were one living Unity.

Page upon page might now be filled with the names of Greeks, who have become Latins, and of Latins who have become Greeks; of Roman Catholics who have turned Anglicans, or Nonconformists; and of Nonconformists and Anglicans, who have turned Roman Catholics. Page upon page might even be filled with the names of those who, having abandoned the communion in which they were born and bred, for some other, have returned to it again, or in despair become sceptics. There have been reactions of one kind or another, in every succeeding age; and upon the whole, there has been but one consistent gainer in all ages—infidelity. Infidelity has been consolidating her ranks

from Christendom for the last three centuries, vigorously, while the majority by far of the populations of the world are still heathen. God grant, that in these days of expediency and worldly wisdom, the Churches of Christ may be disposed to take a lesson from the Mammon of unrighteousness. God grant, that in these days of practical science, they may be ready to eschew each fond theory that conflicts with facts. God grant, that in these days of international intercommunion, they may not refuse to be brought together familiarly, and confer together amicably on subjects relating to their common faith. God grant, finally, that in these days of civilization and enlightenment, Christians may not be the last in the world to abandon their irrational prejudices, and to see that what is, upon the whole, for the advantage of the entire community, is certain to be no less, in the long run, for the advantage of all the different interests that are arrayed under it. Amen.

SERMON XIV.

CHRISTIAN UNITY.

EPH. II. 16.

"AND THAT HE MIGHT RECONCILE BOTH UNTO GOD IN ONE BODY BY THE CROSS."

THE HOLY GHOST has declared it to be the leading purpose of our LORD's mission on earth, that He might "gather together in one the children of GOD that are scattered abroad in this naughty world." It is also declared in the chapter previous to that from which the text is taken, that it is GOD's good pleasure, which He has purposed in Himself, "that in the dispensation of the fulness of time He might gather together in one all things in CHRIST, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in Him." That this was a purpose which lay very near to the Heart of our blessed LORD, is manifest from the prayer which He uttered over His first Eucharist in the night that He was betrayed. I will make a few

observations on this remarkable prayer, before proceeding to the special consideration of the text. In that prayer are these words: "I pray not for these alone;" i.e., the Apostles; "but for them which shall believe on Me through their word, that they all may be one, as Thou, FATHER, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." I wish you to observe particularly the marvellous earnestness of this petition. It is twice repeated. Previously, in the same prayer, the LORD had used these words: that "they may be one as We are." Consider, secondly, the solemn circumstances under which the prayer is offered: namely, when the LORD had gathered around Him His twelve Apostles for the last time of His mortal life, viz., the night before His death.

In the case of ordinary men we rightly attach a special importance to their last words, and yield a scrupulous attention to the wishes expressed in the near prospect of death; for then the human judgment holds the balance with a surer and a truer hand. Moreover the dictates of common affection inspire us with the sincere desire to fulfil the requests and to follow the admonitions which are given under such circumstances.

You should, thirdly, take notice that this prayer of our Blessed LORD was made after He had for the last time partaken of the Jewish Passover. The common participation of a religious ordinance for the last time is a circumstance of great solemnity.

It is also to be observed, fourthly, that it was during the celebration of the Holy Eucharist that this prayer was offered. By this circumstance we are taught the lesson that such prayers as lie nearest to our heart, shall, if possible, be offered in connexion with the great Eucharistic sacrifice.

Our LORD unites His verbal intercession for the Unity of His Church with the Eucharistic memorial of His Passion. No prayer, which is agreeable to GOD'S will, offered under such circumstances, shall go unanswered. The first Eucharist, during which the LORD offered this prayer, is the anticipation of His continual pleading before the throne of the FATHER, which took effect at His Ascension; even as every subsequent celebration of this holy mystery identifies the prayers of the Church on earth with that most effectual and unfailing intercession.

Further, fifthly, observe the nature of the Unity for which the LORD so earnestly prays: "That they all may be one, as Thou, FATHER,

art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us." How entire, how perfect, and how absolute in all respects, is the Unity which is thus expressed! It is clearly a Unity not merely of sentiment or feeling, nor an agreement only in some general points of belief, but unity in the acceptance of each article of the Faith; unity in prayer, in Sacraments, in every act of Christian fellowship, in every office of holy love.

Consider one point more in this marvellous prayer, and that is the end for which Unity is desired—viz., "that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." In these words the conversion of the world is made contingent on the Unity of Christendom. And what do we see abroad? A very large portion of the world unconverted to CHRIST, and a divided Christendom. And what is the condition of *ourselves* as a religious communion? We see a mere handful in the midst of thousands, not at unity among ourselves, and for centuries we have done nothing, and, *as a Church*, we are doing nothing, for the conversion of the heathen. I throw out this remark, by the way, for your consideration; for, if the conversion of the world depends on the Unity of the Church, it is reasonable to expect that conversely the Unity of the Church, or of any part of it, will be

hindered by the neglect of efforts to convert the world. Unity and work are as two correlative forces acting on each other. All experience confirms the truth of either statement. Never were conversions made so rapidly as in the days of the Church's Visible Unity; never have conversions dragged so heavily as in these later days of the divisions and distractions of Christendom.

We will now proceed to the consideration of our text. That refers us to the Cross as the instrument effecting the unity of which we have spoken. "That He might reconcile both" (viz., Jew and Gentile, who comprise the whole world) "unto GOD in one Body by the Cross, having slain the enmity thereby." The enmity of which the Apostle speaks is the result of sin, which had separated men both from GOD and from each other. Sin was slain on the Cross, and therefore by the Cross men are reconciled to GOD, and united with each other. The Church in the Epistle for to-day celebrates the praises of the holy Cross of our LORD, and by the retention of Holy Cross Day in the calendar, she especially directs our hearts to all its wondrous teaching.

The Cross of CHRIST, in the language of the New Testament, indicates CHRIST'S whole religion, with prominent reference to two of its

leading features—viz., atonement and mortification. The first step towards the restoration of Unity in this world of confusion and discord, was the reconciliation of man to God by the removal of the fearful barrier of sin. Through our Lord's atonement, the way to fellowship with God is again opened up. Fellowship with the Father through Christ involves unity among those who are in Christ; but there is need of personal mortification on the part of Christians, in order to the realization of this blessed unity. The atonement made upon the Cross removes the barrier. An opening is thus given for the restoration of Unity; but ere we can enter into its blessedness, the Cross has an office to perform for us. We must each one of us bear the Cross; yea, the power of the Cross must enter within our souls, and leave its blessed image there. Then shall we in truth be reconciled unto God, and knitted into one body by the Cross. S. Paul speaks very explicitly of the power of the Cross on the souls and bodies of such Christians as embrace it by faith and in penitence. "By which—viz., the Cross—the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." But I am now concerned to show that there is special need of self-denial, in order to our

attainment to that Unity which is according to His will. Objectively we are made one CHRIST by virtue of the Sacraments, and on our parts by faith. All who are united with the Head of the One Body, must of necessity have fellowship with each other.

The duty of mutual charity, and of realizing this oneness through love, here begins. *Because* we are in CHRIST, fellow-members of Him, we are bound to manifest our oneness with each other by acts of fellowship and charity. In carrying out this obligation, the necessity of mortification becomes felt. Self-love must be mortified, the conceit of our own opinions suppressed, and our own wills restrained, if we would please our neighbour to his edification; or, in other words, for the building up in CHRIST of ourselves and others, self-pleasing is destructive of the manifestation of Christian Unity. There must be mutual concessions of individual tastes, feelings, and opinions also in matters which are not of faith. On the part of all there is required the absolute submission of the will and intellect to every article of the faith once delivered to the saints, and ever since held, confessed, and taught by the Catholic Church. It is moreover required of us that we be ready to put aside, when occasion demands, personal wishes and preferences, in

order that we may the more perfectly exhibit the brotherly love to which Christian and Church fellowship obliges us. It is clear that all this involves a large measure of self-denial. The Cross, as it has been said, does not only symbolize this virtue in its most perfect type and highest measure, but does also impart to those who receive its power the grace to exercise it. In this sense it is true that our LORD does still through His Cross make one and exhibit as one those who are in Him. The deplorable divisions which so abundantly exist amongst Christians are in part owing to the absence of this virtue of self-denial. Again, the Cross is the visible symbol and a pledge of the love of GOD which passes knowledge. But it is not only the symbol and the pledge of GOD's love. It is more than this. It is the measure of Divine love. Nowhere else was the love of GOD so fully exhibited as on Calvary. Even the love of the Incarnation, the love which angels celebrated at the Nativity, yields (according to human appreciation) in intensity to the love of the Cross. Or we may say the love which the Incarnation reveals, was consummated on the Cross of Calvary. There we behold GOD dying for the love of man! The form of the Cross itself, in its four points—stretching downwards to earth and Hades, up-

wards to heaven, and by its arms extending itself as if to embrace the world—is an apt image of the all-encircling love of Him Who thereon was crucified. Nor is the Cross only a most striking symbol and pledge of the love of JESUS, but it is as a fountain whence it flows into our souls. We find whenever S. Paul or other Apostles would stir in our hearts holy love to GOD, reference is immediately made to the Cross. We are constantly exhorted to the forgiveness of injuries, to tenderness and gentleness towards others by the love which the Cross reveals. These graces realize in ourselves, and exhibit to the world our common unity in CHRIST. One great feature in the sin of schism is the grievous wound which it inflicts on charity. Schism is a violation of the love of CHRIST, which is expansive and unitive. The scandals thereby given to the world, the hindrance thrown in the way of the progress of the Gospel and the Church, and the falls occasioned to individuals, are incalculable. It is not too much to say that schisms subvert the purpose of our LORD's mission, seeing He came to gather together all in one, to "reconcile both in one Body by His Cross;" whereas schisms divide and scatter, by introducing enmity and confusion. My beloved, seeing these things are so, will you not readily confess

the obligation which every Christian lies under to desire, and in every available way to promote, the Unity of the Catholic Church? If "the same mind which was in CHRIST JESUS," be in any degree in us, it must be so. The Visible Unity of the Church is broken up. Thereby the will of GOD is thwarted — the earnest, solemn prayer of our LORD is unfulfilled; one great object of His Incarnation and Death is unrealized; infinite scandal is caused; the conversion of the world is hindered; souls without number are offended. Can we say with the blessed Paul, "Who is offended, and I burn not?" Do we burn with zeal for the restoration of Unity? Are there searchings of heart among us for the divisions of the Church which should be whole and unbroken as the seamless garment of our LORD? There has undoubtedly prevailed a spirit of exclusiveness and of self-satisfaction, not unlike that of the Donatists of old. We have taken pleasure in our differences from other bodies of Catholic Christendom, and prided ourselves on an assumed superiority, rather than mourned over our isolation and defects, and prayed with all the yearning of deep desire, that both we and they might be brought into that Unity which is according to GOD's will; and in which Unity alone it is that each branch or limb of the

Catholic Church can attain to a sound and vigorous spiritual life. My beloved, this is not the mind of CHRIST. It betrays a Pharisaic and self-satisfied spirit.

But you say, what can we do? How can we compose differences or heal divisions? Each one can do something. Effectually you can work this work of peace by earnest and continuous prayer. Pray daily for the restoration of Visible Unity to the Catholic Church. You are sure it is GOD'S will that she should be perfectly one, and therefore that He will grant your prayer. Probably you will not see its fulfilment in this world, but your children may. GOD, with all reverence be it said, cannot (He cannot because He will not) deny the united prayers of His servants who shall agree together to ask that for which His SON so earnestly prayed at His first Eucharist. And does not the Divine Intercessor renew continually that prayer on high? Will He not gladly present such prayers as we offer for the same great object in union with His own? Can you doubt it? More especially it must be so, if you unite those prayers with the great Eucharistic oblation. You know that is one with the heavenly offering. How sweetly and powerfully does the incense of Eucharistic prayer ascend from the hands of the eternal

Priest! There are all around us tokens that God is fulfilling the prayers of His servants. There are to be seen on all sides of us yearnings for this blessed gift of Unity. Some are hastening to obtain it by irregular means; some, we hope, are lawfully working; others patiently waiting; all of these earnestly praying for it. Let it not be that *we* are wanting. Ask not how, dictate not the manner in which, God "shall fulfil such prayers." Ask only for that Unity which is according to His will: that in His own way He will heal the breaches of His Sion, and make again Jerusalem a city at Unity in itself, the praise and joy of the whole earth.

J. C.

A CHARGE,

By Alexander Penrose Forbes, D.C.L., Bishop of Brechin.[1]

If the night in the month Abib, when God smote "Egypt with their first-born," and "all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt," was one "much to be observed unto the Lord by all the children of Israel in their generations," and accordingly graven in the national heart by means of sacrament, institution, and holy song, there is another night of far deeper mystery and more copious benediction, the very thought of which fills the soul of the Christian with a subdued and chastened tenderness, and with awful and adoring thanksgiving. It is that of which it is written, "He then, having received the sop, went immediately out, and it was night." (S. John xiii. 30.)

[1] Addressed to the Annual Synod of the Diocese, summoned to meet at Brechin, on Wednesday, August 5th, 1863.

It is impossible for finite intelligence to enter into the depths of the wondrous words and more wondrous actions which signalise that long, weary night of watching, from the hour when, the even being come, "He sat down with the disciples," till the grey dawn of the morning finds the Redeemer of all men captive in the palace of the High Priest, besmeared with the bloody sweat, betrayed, forsaken, denied, buffeted, and smitten. If we may speak with the utmost reverence, as His Passion approaches, the Divine Victim rises to the occasion. His actions, in kind similarly to all His other actions, but in degree more intensely, become sacramental. He dips the sop in the dish, that the Scripture of the treason might be accomplished. (Ps. xli. 9.) He washes the feet of His disciples, to give them an ensample of humility. He institutes the blessed Sacrament of His Body and Blood under the forms of bread and wine, that He, Who was so soon locally to ascend to heaven, should, after a supernatural and sacramental manner, remain personally to bless His people to the end of the world.

And if such be His actions, His words unfold the deepest mysteries of the kingdom, and manifest His most esoteric doctrine—nay, reveal the sacred recesses of His own most holy Heart.

The law of love—the true and only source of Christian consolation—the revelation of the FATHER—the promise of the Comforter—the inherence of the branch in the true Vine—the assurance of the world's hatred and persecution —the law of acceptable prayer, and, in spite of the proximate fall of the disciples, the eventual conquest of the world—these themes have infused themselves into the very spirit of Christianity, as its subtlest and most perfect essence. But as His hour approaches, the occasion masters all else. He ceases to speak to His disciples. He breaks forth into oral prayer to His Eternal FATHER. He manifests a specimen of that eternal intercourse and intercession which, as the Divine Word, He has ever maintained with Him, and which He was so soon to perfect by means of an immolated humanity. And what is the sum of His prayer? What but Unity!—Unity with GOD through CHRIST—Unity among men in CHRIST. The ineffable archetypal Unity and circumincession of the FATHER and the SON is suggested as the model of the Unity among Christians, and the continuance of the faith in the Divine Mission of the Eternal SON is, so to speak, staked upon the maintenance of the Unity among Christians, "that they also may be One in Us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

And as with the Master, so with the disciple. If ever there was a soil fitted to receive the good seed of the word, it was the city of Ephesus. The history of the Acts of the Apostles shows us that there was a disposition on the part of the inhabitants to receive and to grasp supernatural ideas. Even in its heathenism, Ephesus was the centre of that great and beautiful system of Nature-worship, familiar to us as the cultus of Diana.[1] Under the symbol of a many-bosomed image, the blessed powers of life and nature were symbolized, and the mind was taught to see that there was something beneath external beauty which spoke to it of the Real and the True. So also it was at Ephesus, where the immense sum of 50,000 pieces of silver was the estimated price of the books of magic, showing that, in the midst of the materialistic life of the dying heathenism, there were many who, if they did not seek after

[1] "Artemis was an old Pelasgic goddess of nature, to whom, nevertheless, attributes and functions so very different were assigned in the different places where she was honoured that the attempt to reduce these functions and spheres of operation into a consistent theory can only be effected by an arbitrary and artificial construction. At Ephesus, the Artemis was a kind of Pantheistic Deity, with more of an Asiatic than Hellenic character. She was most analogous to Cybele, as physical mother and parent of all."—Dollinger's "Gentile and Jew," vol. i. p. 87.

better things, at least recognised in the practice of magic a spiritual world beyond the seen and the felt. To minds so prepared, S. Paul speaks with corresponding spirituality. Or rather, the HOLY GHOST, having first disposed their souls to receive the good word, and to grasp the powers of the world to come, pours into them, as they can bear it, the truth of the relation of the Divine SON and of His Spouse. His theme is "the mystery of GOD's will," that "in the dispensation of the fulness of time He might gather *together in one* all things in CHRIST, both which are in heaven and which are on the earth, even in Him" (Eph. i. 9, 10) —"His having quickened us *together* with CHRIST, and raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in CHRIST JESUS, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in CHRIST JESUS"—and the office of CHRIST as "our Peace, who hath made *both one*, and broken down the middle wall of partition—for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace;" so that we are now "fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of GOD, and are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, JESUS CHRIST Himself being the chief corner-stone, in Whom all the building, fitly framed together,

groweth unto a holy temple in the LORD." (Eph. ii. 14, 16, 20, 21.)

"The unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," as illustrated primarily in the revelation of the mystery that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs of the same body, and partakers of the promises in CHRIST by the Gospel, leads on, as a consequence, to the assertion that "there is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling—one LORD, one faith, one baptism, one GOD and FATHER of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in you all." What Holy Scripture thus teaches, the Church from the beginning hath borne witness to, and taught with authority. Even before the addition to the great Eastern Creed—"I believe one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church"—S. Cyprian had borne witness to the necessity of Unity; and the unhappy schism of the Donatists directed the thoughts of the great S. Augustine to the question, and in his controversial books against them we find laid down some of those principles which govern the question.

And what Holy Scripture and the Church thus testify to commends itself to us all by *a priori* reason. If our Blessed LORD vouchsafed a revelation to man, by the very terms it must be an external message. If GOD gave an ex-

ternal message, it must have been committed, no matter whether in the form of a book or of a verbal message, to certain custodiers. These custodiers must, of necessity, form one corporate body, bound (not without special assistance from on high) to hand on their deposit as they received it from generation to generation, each individual being jealously watched by the rest, as to the matter of faithfulness. Expulsion from the community must be the necessary consequence of a faithless performance of this duty in the event of any tampering with the truth; so that, regarding the Church in its aspects as "the witness and keeper of Holy Scripture," as that "which hath authority in controversies of faith," we arrive at the idea of Unity from the very necessity of the case. The doctrine of Unity, you will recollect, is well explained by our own great theologian, Bishop Pearson, who divides the idea of Unity into unity of origination, unity of faith, unity of Sacraments, unity of hope, unity of charity, unity of regiment and discipline.

Or, if we rise into the higher and more transcendental view of the Church as "the Body of CHRIST," and the Pleroma, i.e., "the Fulness" or Complement "of Him Who filleth all things," then, in the words of a great theologian recently deceased, we arrive at this result: "Truth

we cannot conceive other than as one, and the same holds good of Christian truth. The Son of God, our Redeemer, is a distinct Being: He is what He is, and none other. Eternally like unto Himself, constantly one and the same. Not in vain do the Holy Scriptures connect all this with His *Person;* the more they do this, the more important is it to conceive Him exactly as He really is. Certain it is that every error in relation to His Person exercises a more or less injurious influence on the piety and virtue of its possessor: whereas a right knowledge of His Person forms the surest and most solid basis of a holy and happy life. In like manner will the pure appropriation of His *work*, by and in our souls, produce the richest, most substantial, and fairest fruit; while any falsification of that work, in any one respect, is sure to be attended with injurious consequences to practical life. As Christ therefore is one, and His work is one in itself, as accordingly there is one truth, and truth only maketh free, so He can have willed but one Church, for the Church rests on the basis of belief in Him, and hath eternally to announce Him and His work. On the other hand, the human mind is everywhere the same, and always, and in all places, created for truth, and the one truth. Its essential spiritual wants, amid all the changing relations of time and

place, remain eternally the same: we are all sinners, and stand in need of grace, and the faith which one has embraced in the filial simplicity of his heart, another cannot outgrow, though he be gifted with the subtlest intellect, and possess all the accumulated wisdom which the genius of man, in every zone, and in every period of his history, may have produced. Thus the oneness of the human spirit, as well as the oneness of truth, which is the food of spirits, justifies the notion of One visible Church."

But the question of Unity does not stand by itself. In our LORD's prayer the result sought is a universal faith—"That the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me"—the means are the Unity of the disciples, but this Unity itself is dependent on another Unity, the Unity of the disciples with GOD in CHRIST—"that they also may be one in Us." Now, union in GOD is only another word for holiness, so that the two notes of the true Church—unity and sanctity—stand and fall together. When the holiness of the Church has waxed cold, the power of Unity has weakened also, as we may witness in the history of the scandals which brought on the Reformation. Every sin on the part of any Christian tends by so much to injure the sanctity of Christendom, and by so much impairs Unity: and, on the other hand, every good

work done under Divine grace, tends to swell the aggregate of the results of grace, and therefore goes to give coherence to the mass of Christian ideas, a coherence which must eventually develope into a corporate expression of oneness.

And if this be so, the opposite aspect of the proposition is true also. In proportion as Unity has been broken, sanctity has waxed cold. Dispersion has caused a chill, and the separate members of the body cease to receive heat from those which do not touch them. Unity of faith and holiness of life are interdependent and proportionate. This is made plain to us in many parts of Scripture. "If any man will do the will of My FATHER, he shall know of the doctrine." "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things." "Why do ye not understand My speech? even because ye cannot hear (in the sense of obey) My word." "But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but, as the same anointing teacheth you all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in it."

But, now, what is the aspect of the Christian world in these respects? How very far short do we come in fulfilling the precepts of our good Master, either in the way of Unity or of Sanc-

tity! To look out upon mankind is to marvel and to mourn. What a subject of grief for a Christian philosopher is the consideration of the mass of sin contained in any of our great cities! Nor does the country, with its coarse vices and petty jealousies, refresh one more by its contemplation. Why is it that the moment we emerge from the thought of the beauty of the Kosmos, and the regularity of the physical world, into the realm of free-will and responsibility, at once the blight of sorrow falls upon us, and we have to contemplate the image of GOD defiled and marred by sin? And if it pains us who so little estimate its intense malignity, think how the stench of man's sin rising from the reeking cauldron of festering humanity must offend the nostrils of GOD! "O thou Adam! what hast thou done? for, though it was thou that sinned, thou art not fallen alone, but we all that come of thee."

And so in the matter of religion: how different a picture is presented to us by the Christian confessions from the Divine original of our SAVIOUR'S prayer. On every side war without—dissension within. Missions to the heathen, if not notorious failures, bear no proportion to the labour expended on them. Generally, the popular religious ideas are making an undignified retreat before the advance of certain

physical knowledge. In Germany, the great focus of modern thought, we behold the lists staked out, and an enlightened Christian philosophy barely holding its own against the aggression of the rankest infidelity; while in England and Scotland, the reception of "Essays and Reviews," and of Bishop Colenso's exegesis of the Old Testament, is revealing the amount of actual scepticism which has been underlying the crust of respectability which coats the religious thought of the country. Neither can we believe that matters will remain as they are. They will undoubtedly become worse, if a remedy be not supplied. The rash criticism which has hitherto contented itself with attacking the morality of the elder covenant, is now, under the guidance of that fallen angel Renan, attacking the sanctity of the House of Nazareth, and they who have till now permitted themselves to doubt the Old Scriptures of GOD, in the belief that they may still preserve a vague and shadowy faith that clings to the historic Person of the Redeemer, are discovering to their cost, that they who doubt Moses must, by logical sequence, doubt the "Prophet like unto him," and that, to strip "the Law and the Prophets" of their Divine personality, is to invade the incommunicable attributes of Him to whom they bear witness. That, in the end,

the truth will triumph, we may rest assured. Many souls will make shipwreck, but against the Church of which our LORD said, "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I build My Church," we have His Divine assurance that "the gates of hell shall not prevail."[1] At no crisis in the Church has the man been wanting to vindicate the truth of the revelation of GOD. Already the suggestion of the doubts of revelation is raising up an array of learned scholars, who are carefully sifting the different questions—distinguishing what is of faith from what is mere opinion—and bringing the stores of human learning of every kind to corroborate the argument in favour of GOD's truth. A truer metaphysical science is in the ascendant, recognizing, as an essential principle of the operations of thought, the existence of supernatural factors. The very laws of physics and of the constitution of things are throwing new light upon the relations between man and the sacraments. Deeper and truer views of the end of life, and the purpose of man's being, colour even the transitory literature of the day, and one may draw a happy augury of the event of the battle from the very difference of the nature of the weapons which Satan uses now, as compared with the days of Paine and Voltaire. Then the biting jibe and

[1] See Bishop Pearson on the Creed, edit. 1683, p. 336.

hidden sarcasm were the trenchant weapons by which the truth was attacked. Now the assault is made in the guise of a pietistic sentimentalism, and men maunder on about "a CHRIST which is humanity," and have the decency to veil their Pantheism in a Gnostic vagueness of Scriptural expression.

But all this does not touch the root of the matter. An answer appealing to the intellect may help to solve a mental difficulty, but it may fail to touch the inner substance of the convictions. We must ever remember that the essence of justifying faith is that it is belief upon authority. It is not sufficient that a truth satisfies our reason that we should believe it, for all belief implies a certain submission of the soul to an external authority, inwrought by the HOLY GHOST, and intimately affected by the moral condition of the believer in the sight of GOD. We cannot find this authority in the Holy Scripture itself, though the Holy Scripture is the foundation-stone of the faith, for we are at once met by the question, What is the Scripture? Why is the Epistle of S. James canonical, and that of S. Barnabas not so? How can a set of treatises, strung unsystematically together, vouch for each other's inspiration? We are, therefore, by the necessities of the case, driven to the Church which our Arti-

cles describe as "the witness and keeper of Holy Writ," and which S. Paul terms "the pillar and ground of the truth." The Personal CHRIST and His Complement or "fulness"—the Church—become the starting-points whence springs all religious conviction. The Divine Truth, incarnate in the SON of GOD made man, and exhibited and perpetuated in His mystical body, the Church, is manifested as an outward and visible form, and thus becomes, till the end of the world, the ultimate authority in religion —the living exposition of the faith. Hence you will observe that anything which impairs the authority of the Church must affect the ground of faith. If our proposition be true that the unity as well as the sanctity which GOD intended to characterize His Church have been impaired by the depraved exercise of the free will of man—if it be a sad truth that, for the sins of Christendom, the Church of GOD has, for nearly a thousand years, been rent by the division of the East and West—not to speak of the dissensions of the sixteenth century—then you will see how closely the question of the restoration of unity connects itself with the restoration of belief. We are brought back to our SAVIOUR'S prayer—"That they also may be One in us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

The necessity of unity being so patent, not only from the nature of the case, but from the express letter of Holy Scripture, and, on the other hand, the actual appearance of Christendom being so contrary to its theory, we must not be surprised that men, from two opposite poles of religious thought, have propounded a theory of unity, each of which deserves a passing consideration.

The first of these is the unity of Latitudinarianism or Syncretism, which would bring all Christians together on the basis that Christianity contains no one definite message, creed, or system; but that every man's view of revealed religion is acceptable to God, if he acts up to it, and that all that we have to do is to hold in sincerity our own view of religious truth. Now, a theory of unity founded on this assumption must necessarily fail, from the fact that the assumption is emphatically untrue. If God has given a revelation, the subject of that revelation must of necessity be the one only truth, and it becomes binding upon our conscience and mind because it is revealed. It may be a question which of two doctrines is revealed—but one or other must be right. Two opposite views cannot be equally well-pleasing to God.

Another phase of the same theory is that

which holds to what are termed "the essentials" of the Gospel. Men admit that Christianity is a definite system, but they confine the thought of it to one or two leading doctrines which, they say, make up the whole Gospel. Thus, with some the atonement; with others, justification; with a third party, the necessity of belonging to the visible Church; with a fourth, the theory of Christian love; with a fifth, the acceptance of the fact of the resurrection of CHRIST is maintained to be the kernel of the Gospel, and all that needs to be received. This phase, though more plausible and reverent than the purer and simpler Latitudinarianism, fails in this—1st, That it is impossible to get many people to agree upon what is this supposed central truth; and, 2nd, that we have no right, as finite and imperfect beings sitting in judgment on a message from GOD, to determine what is important, what not important, in such a matter. The Divine SAVIOUR significantly warns us against an unfaithful practice of the "least of His commandments," and, assuming that we did know the greater or the lesser of His revelations, the same merciful advice would apply to "the least of His" doctrines. The union of Christians on such a basis as this must fail, if only from its unfaithfulness to the revealed truth.

The other solution of the question is to point to the unity of the Church of Rome; and no one can deny that the aspect she presents in this respect is striking, claiming, as she does, her subjects in every clime, race, and civilization; but, imposing as the sight is, it only serves to show how wonderful would be the result if the Divine SAVIOUR'S prayer were not thwarted by the ill correspondence of mankind. One cannot but feel that that is but an imperfect unity which does not comprehend the grand old Church of the East, so venerable in her traditions, so rigid in her maintenance of the deposit. That unity must be insufficient which, in view of the domination of the great Anglo-Saxon race, and its actual place in the civilization of the world, has failed to touch the Church which, in its strength and its weakness alike, is the expression of its devotion and faith. Nor can a unity be said to be complete which does not assimilate with itself all that is good and pious in the Protestant bodies. In the face of the comparative failure of Christian missions, in view of the increasing infidelity among the thinking classes over Europe, in regard to the low tone of Christian faith and practice through the world, it cannot be said that by such unity as this, the world believes that the FATHER sent the SON.

No, my brethren, the deepest thinkers of the day are stretching forth to a unity which shall comprehend all these scattered members. They feel that if the sixteenth century was one of dispersion, the nineteenth and the twentieth must be one of re-union, if the Son of Man, when He cometh, is to "find *the* faith (as the original Greek is most correctly rendered) on the earth." While, on the one hand, opinions hitherto held in solution are being precipitated, and men are being called, as they never have been called before, to choose between a Christianity organised, hierarchical, and dogmatic, and a scepticism implying sinful uncertainty of mind; on the other hand, as the means of locomotion are developed, and true Christian civilization advances, prejudices are being insensibly worn down, religious bitterness is giving way, and men are coming to see that truth without love is an impossibility in the order of grace. And, as in the century preceding the Reformation, earnest men of all hues of opinion looked forward to the assembling of a General Council as the great cure of the evils of the day, so now may not we, laying to heart the great dangers we are in from our unhappy divisions, hope, and labour, and pray for the hour when the Church of God shall again come together in its glory and strength, when, com-

pelled by the crushing assaults of the common foe, and animated by the earnest desire of peace, all who believe in the Divinity of our Blessed Saviour, and in the necessity of a visible Church as His organ, shall assemble under the guidance of God Himself—when every question shall be calmly discussed, every claim candidly weighed—when misunderstandings shall be righted, logomachies explained—when love shall hold the balance, and the Word of God be arbiter—when the Holy Ghost shall be present, and Christ Himself, as "our Peace," "shall send the rod of His power out of Zion," and, drawing all hearts to Himself, "will raise the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and will raise up its ruins and build it as in the days of old." (Amos ix. 11.)

A. P. F.

SERMON XVI.

"THE NIGHT COMETH."

S. Luke xviii. 8.

"When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find Faith on the Earth?"

At this time, when the hearts of so many Christians in different parts of the Church are yearning after Unity, when God is putting it into their minds to pray for it; when visions of restored communion between the various sections of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, are rising before the eyes of faith; when a mighty acquisition of energy is confidently and prayerfully anticipated as the result of this concentration of powers, larger outpourings of the Spirit of Christ, and new conquests over the dark Kingdom of Satan; it is startling and saddening to find the glorious prospect suddenly obscured by the boding words of my text, to be awakened to the stern consciousness that over the bright vista there is a dark sha-

dow, a solemn Dread, a mysterious gloom, hanging.

Did these words stand alone; were they but some isolated utterance, unconfirmed by other and kindred disclosures of the Inspired Volume, we might reasonably conclude that our first impression as to their meaning, was an erroneous one, and that they were susceptible of an interpretation more in accordance with our devout hopes.

But when we see the awful intimation which they convey, repeated and corroborated throughout the entire compass of the Prophetic Word; when we learn that our LORD, when He suddenly returns to visit His Temple, instead of finding it adorned in the beauty of holiness, will find it tenanted by Antichrist; His "FATHER'S House" become a "House of merchandise;"[1] the "House of Prayer for all nations," converted into a "den of thieves;" "iniquity abounding;" "the love of *the many* (τῶν πολλῶν) waxed cold;" the Faith overridden by a foul and domineering apostasy;[2] the SUN, His own Presence, shrouded in darkness; the Moon, His "faithful witness in heaven," His visible Church, obscured, and stained with the blood-

[1] S. John ii. 16; S. Matt. xxi. 12, 13; Rev. xviii. 3, 11—24; Ezek. xxviii. 16.

[2] 2 Thess. ii. 3, ἡ ἀποστασία; 1 Tim. iv. 1, ἀποστήσονται.

red dye of the "souls of men;"[1] the "stars," the Angels and luminaries of the Churches, fallen from their spheres; the sacred Salt, which should have kept the world from corruption, itself powerless to season, and "good for nothing, save to be trodden underfoot of men;" the "faithful city become a harlot;" the living Body a rotting carcase;[2] the fearful "night come when no man can work;" "all the earth full of darkness and cruel habitations." When we find these, and a hundred other corroborative intimations as to the state of the world and the visible Church at our LORD's return, it behoves us seriously to ponder them, and allow them a due place and influence in our meditations.

The contemplation is a saddening one. When S. John had digested the Little Book containing the Prophetic History of the Church, which the Angel had given him to eat, though sweet in his mouth, it made his "belly bitter." When the Prophetic Roll was spread out before Ezekiel, he found it to contain "lamentation, and mourning, and woe." When Daniel was made to understand the vision of the latter days, he was "astonished, and fainted, and was sick certain days." And to those among ourselves who

[1] Rev. vi. 12; i. 20; xviii. 13, 24.

[2] S. Matt. xxiv. 28. No longer σῶμα, but πτῶμα. Job xxxix. 30. Cf. Isa. lxvi. 24; Rev. xix. 17—21.

devoutly contemplate it, the same vision will appear equally sad and distressing. But for us, therefore, to *close* our eyes to it, to look out for the Morning, and forget that "the Night cometh," and that the Night *precedes* the Day, this, surely, is not wise.

I. And here let me advert to a question which will at once present itself:—

If this gloomy prospect be the true prospect, how and when are all the glorious predictions, of which the visible Church is the subject, to be realized? Are they never to meet with their accomplishment? Is CHRIST'S promise to come utterly to an end for evermore? Are we to conclude that the work of the Church, for which we are encouraged in full assurance of faith to labour, will have proved at the end a dead failure? That CHRIST'S own prayer, that His Church may be *one*, and "that the *world* may" through her "*believe*," shall never be answered? Assuredly not.

"The knowledge of the LORD shall" yet "cover the earth as the waters cover the sea." CHRIST'S "kingdom shall come," and GOD'S "will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." "All the ends of the world shall remember themselves and be turned unto the LORD, and all the kindreds of the people worship before Him." "Glorious things are spoken of Zion,

the city of the living GOD;" and glorious things shall be yet realized in her. The "LORD shall comfort her: He shall make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD. Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody. The redeemed of the LORD shall return, and come to her with singing: and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away."[1]

II. But *when?* When shall these glorious Scriptures, which tell of the exceeding gladness and prosperity of the Church—her Unity, Majesty, and Dominion—her joyous and beneficent rule over the nations of the earth, and their willing submission to her sway—when shall they all be realized? *Before* the second coming of CHRIST, or *after?* *Not* before, but after.

Or, to speak more correctly, only in a very faint and imperfect measure, before—as though by way of earnest and foretaste; not in their fulness and reality, till after.

"The Gospel of the kingdom must," even before CHRIST comes, "be preached in all the world," not with any revealed prospect of converting the whole world, but "for a *witness* unto all nations: and then shall the end come."

[1] Isa. li. 3, 11.

"God shall visit the Gentiles to *take out of them* a people for His Name." But it is not till a New Dispensation, that "*all* kings shall fall down to Him, *all nations* do Him service;" not till then[1] that "the *abundance* of the sea shall be converted unto" Christ's Church, and the "forces of the Gentiles come unto her;" and "*all* shall know God from the least unto the greatest."[2] It is not till the "Kingdom comes," that these glorious predictions shall be fulfilled, and "the people bring free-will offerings with an holy worship." "The people shall be willing in the Day of Thy *Power*."[3]

But the Day, or Dispensation, of manifested "Power," is not yet. As yet we daily pray, "Thy kingdom *come*." Christ Himself has not yet been manifested as a King: the last time the world saw Him, He was dying the death of a crucified malefactor. He has visibly discharged His prophetic and sacerdotal functions; and these His Church is now administering in His absence. True, He is even yet exercising a most real, though spiritual dominion, by His Spirit and through His Church, in the hearts of His faithful ones. But still the *Kingdom*, in the full prophetic sense of the term, is not yet.

[1] Isa. lix. 20; lx. 5. [2] Isa. lx. 21; Jer. xxxi. 34.
[3] Ps. cx. 3.

For He will not assume it, until His Church is ready to share it with Him. But she is still in nonage, growing, training, preparing. It is not till she is ready to share His throne, that the Royal Bridegroom "takes to Himself the great Power and reigns."

It is not till the Nobleman, having received His kingdom, *returns*[1] to take possession of it, that He raises His faithful servants to a share in the government thereof. It is in the *Regeneration*, when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory," that His Church shall be exalted to "sit *with* Him on His throne."[2]

The carnal Jews were eager to bring about the kingdom by earthly means, to "take JESUS by force and make Him a king." And carnal Christendom has ever been eager to do the same, and by means of State Churches and Church States, and other worldly expedients, to *anticipate* the solemn inauguration of the kingdom; endeavouring to externalize, to exhibit as an object of sense, draped in the pomp and pageantry of earthly royalty, that Kingdom which as yet is "within," and "not of this world," which "cometh not with observation."

The Church has yet to be "despised and rejected of men;" to pass, like her LORD, through the Cross to her Crown; to "suffer with Him"

[1] S. Luke xix. 11—15. [2] S. Matt. xix. 28.

here, before she "reigns with Him." All worldly self-exaltation now will only issue in abasement and humiliation hereafter.

I repeat then, that the glorious predictions which Holy Scripture contains, respecting the future triumphs of the Church, do not militate one jot against the awful intimation, embodied in the words of my text, that when the Son of Man cometh, the Faith will be, all but, if not altogether, extinct upon earth, and the piercing cry have ascended to heaven, "Help, LORD, for there is not one godly man left!" All things will be at their very worst; the "darkest hour," that which immediately precedes the dawn, will have come. Man's extremity will be GOD'S opportunity.

The prophetic glories of the Kingdom will succeed, not precede, this awful crisis.

III. Moreover, another consideration must be carefully borne in mind; CHRIST, before He sets up His Royal Kingdom, must first "gather out of it all things that offend;" He must "thoroughly purge His floor." The Bride, before she is fit to reign, must be "all glorious," "without spot or wrinkle," holy and pure. But is this the case with the visible Church at the present time? Is she not rather, throughout her manifold ramifications, defiled with a creeping and deep-seated leprosy, which is showing

its deadly plague spot, now in this direction, now in that?

What says the Apostle? There is yet in the inmost heart of Christendom, a fatal "mystery of lawlessness," (μυστήριον τῆς ἀνομίας, 2 Thess. ii. 7), stealthily spreading; opposing and counterworking the "Mystery of Godliness," (μυστήριον τῆς εὐσεβείας, 1 Tim. iii. 16); and hereafter to burst forth, and be revealed in all its full blown and manifested malignity.

Now, so long as this hidden leaven[1] of wickedness is at work, the real glories of the Kingdom can never be disclosed; there will be abundant marks of royalty, but only "of the earth, earthy."

IV. But is the visible Church thereby incapacitated from working for God? Is she so paralyzed by this secret element of weakness, that she is unable to bring souls to Christ? No: Jerusalem, notwithstanding her corruptions, is still God's holy city; His visible Church is still His instrument for saving and blessing the nations. The Scribes and Pharisees still sit in the seat of the true Moses, and speak with heaven-commissioned authority. She is still slowly, uncertainly, fitfully, and in much infirmity, doing Christ's work; gathering together His elect, the mystic "number"

[1] S. Matt. xiii. 33; xvi. 12; 1 Cor. v. 6, 7.

of whom shall at last, when He cometh, have been painfully "accomplished." After this, the Restraining Power[1] being removed, which has hitherto kept in check the surging tide of lawlessness;[2] the Spiritual Lot having taken His departure out of Sodom; the tumultuous torrent shall foam and swell, and cover the whole face of Christendom with its desolating wave. "The night shall have come when no man can work." "All the earth shall be full of darkness." No star shall illumine that horrible gloom. "The moon shall be black as sackcloth of hair."

V. We are too prone to regard the history of the *Church* merely in reference to, and as identical with, its *visible* mundane history. We are too apt to measure its growth and progress, merely by the effects which meet the eye; to regard it as an object of sense, and not of faith. But outward appearances are deceptive; it is in *Paradise* only that the real growth of the Church can be discerned; it is *there* that the mystical Temple is gradually rising in all its shadowy grandeur and beauty. *Here,* the several stones are hewn and chipped, squared, polished, and carved: one after another, by Angel workmen, under the direction of the Great Architect, are they silently conveyed to their quiet

[1] τὸ κατέχον, 2 Thess. ii. 6. [2] ἀνομία, ib.

resting places; for "the House," we read, is "built of stone, made ready before it is brought thither; so that there is neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard in the House while it is in building." *There* shall they, the living stones, in peaceful anticipation, abide, "each one resting on his bed," until the last is added, the secret number made up, the Building complete, and the glorious Day of Consecration arrives.

When CHRIST revisits this *earth*—so far from His Church being in a flourishing and prosperous condition, it almost seems intimated that it will hardly exist. The scaffolding is removed when the building is complete. The carnal counterfeit of the Church, the once visible Temple of the LORD, the then State Establishment of Antichrist,[1] GOD's profaned *workshop*, where (at last, amid impiety and blasphemy) the living stones have been shaped and chiselled—this will be a mass of desolate ruins. And just as the godless Antediluvians—after being employed by GOD to aid His faithful servant in building the ark—as soon as their foreordained work was accomplished, were swallowed up in the devastating torrent; so shall these miserable "sons of the adulterer and the whore" of the latter days, as

[1] Dan. ix. 27; S. Matt. xxiv. 15; 2 Thess. ii. 4.

soon as they have completed their mysterious task of persecuting, and polishing, and perfecting through suffering, the last of GOD's living stones—the two sackcloth-clad Witnesses[1]—be engulfed in the devouring stream of the fiery deluge.

The LORD is now, little by little, "gathering together His wheat into the garner;" when this is done, He will come and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. Out of His visible Jerusalem, then become Babylon, He will have summoned, one by one, His little faithful band, whose presence has hitherto been the safety of the doomed city.[2] Their removal is the signal for judgment to take its inexorable course. *They*, meanwhile, shall be "taken from the evil to come; they shall enter into peace;" "they shall be hid in the day of the LORD's fierce anger," (Isa. lvii. 1, 2; Zeph. ii. 1—3.)

So that there are really *two* histories, running side by side, and for a long time intimately associated—the history of the visible, and that of the invisible Church; the shell and the kernel, the chaff and the wheat, the "*woman*" and the "remnant of her seed that keep the commandment of GOD." (Rev. xii. 17.) The former of these the serpent successfully tempts; the latter

[1] Rev. xi. 3—7. [2] Rev. xviii. 4, 5.

he persecutes: the former becomes Babylon, the harlot; the latter Jerusalem, the Bride. The former is, even to the last, holy; but only for the sake of the latter, and for the "ten righteous within the city." So soon as the word has gone forth, "Come out of her, my people," then, from being the visible temple of GOD, she at once becomes "the habitation of devils, and the hold of every unclean and hateful bird."

VI. But all this conducts to a consideration of deep practical interest and importance.

If such is to be the *end* of CHRIST'S visible Church; if all our strivings after reunion, our labours for Church extension and revived Catholicity, are to issue in this deplorable result, the disappearance of the Faith from the earth; if, instead of glory, the Church is to meet with shame, instead of victory, defeat; what need is there—is there *any* conceivable need or encouragement—to labour one jot after restored union between the disintegrated portions of the one Church, and after the consequent revival of primitive doctrine, discipline and fellowship?

There is urgent need for all this, and abundant encouragement. Such prayers and efforts *must* be crowned with success. A return to the pure ancient Faith of Christendom, and a consequent drawing together of all that is good

and sound in the Church, *must* yet take place, in order that the end may come, the LORD may come, and the real glories of the Bride, the Body of CHRIST, may come.

The considerations which have already passed before us, will help us to understand this. But in order to bring it more plainly before you, I will ask your attention to one or two questions, which will perhaps help to exhibit the matter in a clearer light.

1. First then. What, according to the teaching of Holy Scripture, will be the *immediate* power which will prevail to bring our Blessed LORD back again to earth? It will be the earnest, unremitting, importunate *prayers* of His people; not only of the Church requiescent in Paradise, but chiefly of the suffering remnant on earth. "Come, LORD JESUS, come quickly." "How long, O LORD, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood!" "And *shall* not GOD avenge His own elect, which *cry day and night* unto Him, though He bear long with them!"

2. But are there any such fervent and irresistible prayers offered up *now?* Is there any such deep, heartfelt intensity of longing throughout universal Christendom for that second Advent, as *must* prevail with GOD, and "bring again the First-begotten into the world?" No.

The Church does *not* truly, throughout her length and breadth, feel herself "a widow and desolate, and continue in prayers night and day." Has not her secret language, as expressed in many parts of her history, been rather, "I sit as a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow?"[1] Has she not committed fornication with the "kings of the earth?" instead of mourning in conscious bereavement the visible absence of her Divine Spouse and LORD? Even yet, notwithstanding the many chastisements wherewith she has been from time to time visited, she is, throughout her whole visible framework, too much wedded to the world, to allow of her, really and deeply, and from out her "heart of hearts," longing, and yearning, and waiting, and watching, and praying, for the return of her heavenly Bridegroom.

A change then, must have come over the face of Christendom before this can be. The Church on earth must find her lovers false, and faithless, she must realize more keenly her state of spiritual widowhood; she must be rudely disentangled from her multitudinous earthly alliances and flattering state connexions, before she is brought, in her bereavement and isolation, to "lift up her eyes to the hills from whence cometh her help."

[1] Rev. xviii. 7.

3. What then will it be, that will impart the special earnestness, the resistless fervour to the Church's prayers?

The ruthless and bloody *persecution* to which she is exposed—a persecution unparalleled in all her former experiences—arising not only from the "open Adversary," the anti-Christian world, but even from her own familiar friend, who has worshipped at her own altars, and who, "eating Bread with her, hath lifted up the heel against her;" from the world *without* and the world *within* her visible borders; from the anti-Christ and the false Christ; from the Beast and from the Harlot; from the "*nations*" who "furiously rage," and from her own "*people*" who "imagine" against her "a vain thing." Ah! then, when lover and friend alike prove faithless—when not only the seven-headed ten-horned monster, the combined godless powers of *earth* make war against God's witnessing suffering remnant, but also (as the beloved Apostle, aghast at the awful spectacle, predicts,) the *woman* herself, once "espoused as a chaste virgin to Christ," takes part with him, and becomes "drunken with the blood of the martyrs of the Lord Jesus."[1] When persecution and temptation alike wax overpowering, and "fearfulness and trembling take hold upon her, and

[1] 2 Cor. xi. 3; Rev. xvii. 6.

a horrible dread overwhelmeth her;" oh, then, what can she do, but "pour out her heart by herself," even till "her eyes fail her with waiting so long upon her GOD for Him to arise and have mercy upon her?" What can she do, but long and pray, with an intensity which will brook no denial, for her "LORD JESUS to come, and come quickly?"

4. But once again. What will be the source and origin of all this extremity and desolation which shall overtake CHRIST'S faithful Remnant? What shall have *evoked* this bloody persecution from without and from within her?

Ah! brethren, here is the solemn question for us all to ponder. Here is the point to which I am anxious to bring you.

The real and secret *cause* of this terrible persecution, will be nothing more nor less than the very revival of Catholic doctrine and practice, the restoration of ancient faith, and perhaps visible intercommunion, for which so many throughout the length and breadth of Christendom are now praying and longing; the meeting again in CHRIST, and in the circle of that *one* unalterable "Faith once for all delivered," of the long disunited members of the One Body, who having, some in one direction some in another, swerved from the fixed line of "the doctrines of CHRIST," have swerved and

fallen from each other. Yes, this revival of Christian Faith, in all its stern, unsullied beauty and purity, and Christian Love, as proceeding therefrom,—*this* will be really the secret motive cause which shall ultimately bring on the dire persecutions of the latter days. The ancient age of martyrs was the age of simple, unadulterated faith. The restored faith of coming times shall introduce a new era of martyrs. The Smyrna of the early Christian period will find more than a counterpart in the Philadelphia of the latter days.[1]

The early Church, like her LORD, conquered by suffering. But she became impatient: she longed for more speedy and visible triumphs. The painful "Via Crucis" displeased her. The second Eve, serpent-beguiled, longed to taste of the forbidden fruit of *worldly* pomp and glory. She wished for the "purple and fine linen" of earth's nobles. She tasted: she waxed powerful: she became "rich and increased with goods, and had need of nothing." Her successes seemed great; but they were not genuine. She overcame the world, by suffering herself to be overcome by the world: she conquered by yielding: she became corrupted by the very heathenism which she overthrew. The rigid purity and sweet sternness of ancient faith

[1] Rev. ii. 8—10; iii. 7—10.

and practice did not suit the giddy godless world: so the Church became easy and pliant: instead of resolutely labouring to bring the world up to her standard, she lowered her standard to suit the world. Many and severe disciplines and chastisements has she had, to bring her back to her obedience; and in some parts of her borders with good effect. But yet, regarding Christendom as a whole, how feeble the influence of the Church, how hesitating her voice! With how little of a united and emphatic utterance is that changeless Faith bequeathed to her by CHRIST earnestly contended for and enunciated! How nervelessly is that sacred weapon wielded, which alone "overcometh the world!" How little is the Church felt as a living, actual, aggressive *power*, "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners!" But she *shall yet again* be seen, and heard, and felt, as CHRIST'S living representative on earth. There shall be a secret drawing of all that is real and true throughout Catholic Christendom, to CHRIST and to the One Faith; and so of one member to another, in Him. For it is only as the Church builds herself up on her most holy *Faith*, that she keeps herself in the *Love* of GOD: in proportion as any measure of *Faith* is lost, in that proportion is the cohesive power

of *Love* weakened and diminished. The outward "bond of peace" can only be regained by a return to the inward "unity of the Spirit."

5. Thus, then, I repeat, it will be this revived purity of faith and practice on the part of the Church—this infusion, by means of restored intercommunion, of fresh energy into her—this bolder assertion of her spiritual claims—this closer conformity to her LORD, and manifested antagonism, therefore, with "all that is not of the FATHER," which will awaken the active and bitter malignity of the world, without and within her. For there *is* a World *within* her. There is a religious World. There is a true and a false element at work in the Church. But a time of tremendous searching and sifting has to come. CHRIST shall take His awful Fan, that He may "throughly purge His floor."

What was it exposed the secret unsoundness, and precipitated the latent wickedness, of GOD'S ancient Church? It was the presence within her of Incarnate TRUTH. All who were of the Truth heard His voice. His Divine Beauty attracted to itself, and so to each other, all who were really faithful and true-hearted. Whereas all who were not of the Truth hated the light, and would not come to the light, lest their un-

truth should be reproved. And so shall it be with CHRIST'S visible Church, in times yet to come, and, it may be, not far distant. The revived power of the Pure Faith and Practice of Apostolic times, the living presence of TRUTH witnessed in CHRIST'S earthly members, shall secretly excite the malignity of the enemy, and stir up, through his instigation, all who are "not of the FATHER."

Why have the world and the Church been, on the whole, such good friends for centuries? S. John seems to intimate that *both* have effected a compromise; that the Beast has lost, as it were, its bestial life, and become wounded to death;[1] the Woman lost her virgin purity, and become secularized and profane; the World has become outwardly Christian, the Church inwardly worldly. The Mystical Woman, instead of "treading on the young lion and the dragon," and energetically "overcoming the world," has entered into alliance with him, using him as her beast of burden; she direct-

[1] Rev. xiii. 3. "Now shall the prince of this world be cast out," says our LORD. Here is the evil spirit of heathenism ejected from the civilized world. But his rejection is not final. "With seven other spirits more wicked than himself," he ultimately regains possession of his once deserted habitation, and "the latter end" of his victim "is worse than the first." Heathenism dies into Christianity, but is revived, in a more intensified, and blasphemous, and diabolical form, in *Anti-Christianity*.

ing him, he sustaining her. Hence to all appearance they are very good friends.

But "the deadly wound shall be healed;" and the revived Beast, or Anti-Christian World-Power, having first combined with his confiding and infatuated Rider in a bloody persecution of CHRIST's Witnesses, and a ruthless extermination of the pure Faith of CHRIST, shall at last turn furiously upon her, tear her loathingly to pieces, and burn her flesh with fire: for GOD shall "put it into their hearts" thus to execute His awful will.[1]

We foolishly dream that because the world is, on the whole, so civil to the Church, the latter has not much to fear from her old antagonist, and that the Serpent's Seed has forgotten its old enmity against the Seed of the Woman. Ah! the Church has yet to learn the deep-seated intensity of that enmity. So long as the Church is easy and compliant, so long as the world can make use of and humble her, so long it will tolerate her, but so long only. Let her fearlessly assert her celestial claims, let her boldly witness for the "Faith once for all delivered," let her bravely testify of the world that the deeds thereof are evil, let her truly impersonate CHRIST, and the words of our LORD will be instantly realised: "If

[1] Rev. xvii. 16, 17.

they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you." So long as the evil spirit is allowed to remain in peaceful possession he will be content: but let the Stronger than the strong rudely break in upon his domain, let the SON of GOD appear to "torment" him by His dreaded presence, let him see that his expulsion is imminent, then will his despair, and exasperation, and terror burst forth in all their tumultuous violence.

VII. I repeat, then, that so far from these sad intimations, respecting the future of the visible Church and the so-called Christian world, being any *discouragement* to working and praying for the revival of Truth and Catholicity, and, if GOD will, for restored intercommunion in CHRIST and in the circle of the One Faith between the sundered members of the One Body,—they rather tend to urge us on to persevere: they encourage us to hope that our prayers and labours shall have issues, not perhaps such as we could have fondly desired, but yet most real, and fruitful, and glorious; and that, in answer to them, GOD shall nerve His Church to make new and vigorous inroads into the kingdom of Satan, such as shall bring about the persecutions of the latter days, with a new era of martyrs, shall enable the Mystical Body to fill up what remains of the sufferings of her

Divine Head, and conduct her, through humiliation and bereavement, through contempt and loss of all things, through Gethsemane and Calvary, to a blessed and triumphant Easter.

We have seen that the latter days of GOD'S ancient Church were marked by the appearance of Incarnate TRUTH within her borders, and that it was the fearful searching and sifting caused by His august presence, the separation between the chaff and the wheat, the powers of light and darkness, which precipitated the end of that Dispensation. All that was good and true in the visible Church rallied around Him; all that was hollow and false leagued against Him. His own false Church, the once "faithful city," now "become a harlot," combined at last with the Anti-Christian world-power in crucifying Him: herself about to be, by the same power, ignominiously shattered and overcome.

And so shall it be in Christendom. The pure Catholicity, the severe holiness, the unsullied faith of the latter days,[1] while drawing together all who are "of the Truth," will ex-

[1] It is to be observed that the Angel who proclaims the fall of Babylon is immediately preceded by an Angel flying through mid-heaven, bearing the "Everlasting Gospel" to the nations. (Rev. xiv. 6, 8.) As though the preaching of "the Everlasting Gospel," the Changeless Revelation of GOD, were to be the very instrument whereby the "inward heart

asperate all who are false, worldly, half-hearted; and unite them in adverse league to check the advance of the Kingdom of CHRIST. As of old, unadulterated Truth shall bring, "not peace, but a sword," not union, "but division;" and CHRIST shall find His bitterest "foes" amongst "them of His own household."

VIII. The view which I have taken of the future of Christendom is, in some sense, a very depressing one; and one which, I well know, is little in accordance with the cherished dreams and hopes of many of CHRIST's faithful and loving members.

But I am deeply persuaded that the opinions entertained by some on these points, are superficial and fallacious. Many seem to think that, if only visible intercommunion in Christendom can be re-established, on whatever terms, all will be well. The world will meekly bow her neck to the yoke of the Cross, and a bright millennial period will be peacefully inaugurated. Ah! they forget that the *Evening* precedes the Morning, that Life only comes through *Death*, the *Cross* prepares for the Crown, the Church *suffers* with CHRIST before she reigns with Him.

There are true and false tendencies to union

of unbelief" of GOD's faithless Jerusalem should be exposed, her active hostility against the Truth aroused, her Babylonish character exhibited, and her doom fixed.

now stirring in the Church. There is a holy tendency to union between all the "remnant of the Woman's Seed who keep the commandments of GOD, and have the testimony of JESUS CHRIST;"[1] and there is the old fatal tendency to union between the Woman herself and the Beast, or power of the world. Many are the fair and specious forms which this latter tendency assumes; and very difficult is it, at times, to discern how far it is of the FATHER, and how far from the prince of the world. Many seem to imagine that visible unity, at any price, is a great boon. But, no. A restored intercommunion based on anything, either *short of*, or *more than*, the One Old "Faith, once for all delivered," would be no blessing but a curse to the Church, a perpetuation of weakness, a deadly enervation and enfeeblement of her real powers.

The fact of the Church being now visibly disunited, is an infallible proof that she *has* fallen away, somehow or other, from the true and only centre of Unity, and that there have been deflections, to the right hand or the left, in the way of subtraction or addition, from the ancient Faith. I say not where. Let all and each look to themselves. But I do say, that the only way to promote any re-union worthy the name, is not by bootless endeavours after

[1] Rev. xii. 17.

compromises and adjustments, not by any branch of the Church, for the sake of a false peace, allowing herself to accept even one single dogma, however speciously commended, which cannot establish its claim to have been part of the heritage bequeathed to the whole Body from the very first; but by all parties praying for, and honestly striving after, a closer conformity, doctrinal and practical, to that pure Apostolic faith of early Christendom, to which alone "victory over the world" is pledged, leaving all issues, and details, and arrangements to the wise orderings of GOD's loving providence.

Let all who earnestly seek after restored Unity and Catholicity, seriously bethink themselves *what* faithfulness to CHRIST will cost those who shall be privileged to witness for Him, and participate, for His sake, in the trials of the latter days. Let them seriously examine what is the practical answer which their hearts and lives are even now returning to their LORD's tenderly searching question:

"Are ye able to drink of the Cup that I drink of? and be baptised with the Baptism that I am baptised with?"

To GOD the Ever Blessed TRINITY "be glory in the Church by CHRIST JESUS throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

✠ D.

SERMON XVII.

THE BROKEN NET.

S. Luke v. 6.

"Their net brake."

Our Blessed Lord would not have wrought the miracle of the draught of fishes without having some special object in view in its performance. We can see at once that it was to serve some other purpose than that of manifesting His Own Divine Power, or of rewarding His Apostles for their fruitless industry. They had "toiled all the night, and had taken nothing." It is obvious that He took advantage of their want of success to instruct them in an important truth, and that in a manner which they would be little likely to forget. And indeed, in all the miracles which our Blessed Lord performed, He had a further object in view than that which appears at first sight. "He went about doing good," but it was not merely or

chiefly to the bodily wants of men that His care was given—their spiritual needs claimed His first regard. It was, indeed, by His miracles that He showed Himself to be Very God, and confirmed the faith of those who saw them—"The works that I do they bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me"—but these works were used by Him as the means of imparting instruction of a more lasting kind than that which was conveyed by word of mouth. It is chiefly in this light that we are to regard them now. We look upon them as acted parables. We search, as we read them, for the spiritual instruction which they contain, and gather from them teaching, doctrinal, prophetic, or practical, as the case may be.

And when we examine the miracle of the draught of fishes, viewed as a medium for conveying spiritual instruction, we shall find it to be singularly graphic and complete. Our Lord evidently intended by it to picture prophetically the state of the Church in after time. The very circumstances under which it was performed would show this, even had our Lord not chosen to give a clue to its interpretation by the words which He addressed to His Apostle at its close—"From henceforth thou shalt catch men." He had just before been instructing the multitude Himself, and then, when this

was over, He bade His Apostles to let down their nets for a draught. Just so it was after the days of His Own personal ministry on earth had been fulfilled. He gave His commission to His Apostles, and bade them go forth and gather into the Church such as should be saved. They were to launch out into the deep, and there to let down their nets in faith. Their sound was to go forth into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world. The net of the Catholic Church was to draw men even from the most distant parts of the earth. "The kingdom of heaven," said our LORD on another occasion, "is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind." This Jeremiah had in ancient times foretold when he wrote, "Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the LORD, and they shall fish them." And the Prophet Ezekiel made use of the self-same figure in describing the future kingdom of the Church which should be established on earth. He also spoke of fishers who should spread forth nets, and "their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many." And further, whereas the term "hunters" is used in Holy Scripture to represent the persecutors of the Church, there would seem to be a peculiar fitness in likening the preachers of CHRIST'S Gospel to "fishermen."

Theirs is a quiet and gentle art; and it is by gentleness and persuasion, and not by violence and force, that souls are brought under the dominion of JESUS CHRIST.

But the part of the transaction which we have chiefly to notice now is that to which the text refers. In obedience to our LORD's bidding the Apostles let down the net, and "they enclosed a great multitude of fishes, and their net brake." Viewing this in the light of a prophecy, how exactly did it represent that which we see actually taking place afterwards in the history of the Church. So long as the members of the Body of CHRIST were few in number, they continued "of one heart and of one soul." There was no rending of that bond of union which kept them as a close and compact body. The "fellowship" as well as the "doctrine" of the Apostles was maintained. Not, indeed, that we are to suppose that there was no disposition in the first Christians to quarrel and dispute. We hear of such things very early indeed in the Church's history. One of the first attempts which Satan made to the prejudice of the Kingdom of CHRIST on earth was to stir up bickerings and heartburnings amongst its members. He trusted by this means to create a schism in the Body. For instance, we read that at the very first "there

arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration." But steps were at once taken to remove the cause of jealousy, and the dissension was overcome. And as we trace the history of the infant Church in the Acts and the Epistles, we find that the danger of division was one which was constantly threatening it. Still, although there were many disputes, there was no very serious schism. This only occurred when the Church had become, so to speak, popular. It was the multitude of the fish which were enclosed that caused the net to break. As the Church grew wealthy, and it became respectable to be a Christian, primitive faith and fervour waned, discipline relaxed, and schisms followed as a matter of course.

And when we look around us now at the present day, we see the sad result of all this. What a picture does the Church of CHRIST present to the world now! That Church which was the subject of our LORD's wondrous prayer, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be One, as Thou, FATHER, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be One in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

"That they all may be One"—and we behold

the Eastern and Western Churches rent asunder now for something like eight hundred years. "That they all may be One"—and two Communions divide the West. We look at our own isolated position as English Churchmen, visibly severed from the rest of Western Christendom, though spiritually united in the Body of CHRIST, which is, and indeed can be, but one. Yes, still spiritually united in confessing the same ancient Creeds, partaking of the same Sacraments, above all joined to the same Head. But corporate union we have not, and it is for this that we now long and pray. As our Blessed LORD's prayer was, so must be ours, that we "all may be One"—"that the world may believe."

"They enclosed a great multitude of fishes, and their net brake." Now if we look to the Greek version of this passage, we shall find that our English rendering does not strictly give the force of the word employed. Correctly given, it should be translated, "The net was on the point of breaking," or "was beginning to break." We may suppose, therefore, that some of the strands had actually given way, but that the breach looked more serious than it really was. We can picture to ourselves the dismay of the Apostles when they fancied that the net was coming to pieces before their

eyes. Their fears were vain ones; for, whatever might have been the extent of the rent, we are not led to suppose that any of the fish which the net contained were lost. And no doubt this is intended to instruct us, and to give us comfort as we view the condition of the Church around us. We look with sorrow and perplexity at the disunited state of Christendom, just as the Apostles did at their broken meshes. Some there are who, in sheer despair, will leave their own boat and join those in the other boat, simply because the fishermen who are in it tell them that their part of the net is still as firm and strong as ever. But it is the same net all the while, and the fishermen all belong to the same company, in whatever boat they may chance to be. They are "partners," and the rending of the net will equally affect them all.

It is natural and right that we should grieve, as we notice how many of the strands in the Church's net have come asunder—as we view the rents and divisions which have resulted from the multitude of fish which have been gathered into it; but it is not the part of wise men to lose heart, and give up all for lost. To leave the boat from whence the rent is most visible, is certainly not the way to mend the net, or to land the fish. It may be that in the

end the result of this disunion in the Church over which we mourn, may turn out to be less serious than we deem it now. Although the net be broken, it may not be so seriously broken but that the fish may yet be landed safely on the eternal shore. We know that in numberless instances the very evils which are allowed to come upon us for our sins, may be made to serve a good purpose, if rightly used. Even in so great an evil as divisions in the Church, this will doubtless be found true. The fishermen will handle their net more carefully when they see that some of the strands and meshes have parted in twain. And so, we doubt not, it is with the Church. Heresies, as they have arisen, have had the effect of calling forth more full and accurate definitions of the Faith, and the Church has clearly been the gainer. And so with Schisms. The presence of division amongst us may not be an unmixed evil. It may teach us to value the blessing of unity more and more. It may serve to keep in check that evil spirit of pride, self-sufficiency, and haughty isolation, which is not only at the root of all schism, but is in direct antagonism to the Catholic spirit which should pervade the Church of CHRIST.

But further. We see in the account of the miracle which we are considering, that not

only did the net begin to give way, but the ship itself, in which the fishermen were, began to sink. The Apostles, we may conceive, had well nigh given themselves up for lost, but JESUS was with them still. Yes—and He is with the Church now, divided though it be. "Fear not," He says to us now—"Fear not," though the net seems at times coming to pieces, the fish likely to be lost, and your labour to be thrown away. "Fear not," though even the ship appears to be in jeopardy. Trust in the virtue of My Presence, and, in spite of all discouragements and dangers, all shall be well at last.

Let us remember, also, that the spiritual condition of the Church is not really at its best when all seems fair and prosperous around. The successful draught brought the ship down to the very water's edge, and it was the danger, not the success, which drew S. Peter to his Master's feet.

One thing further we must remark, which seems to encourage us to take the hopeful view which has been adopted in this sermon with regard to the future state of the Church, divided though it be. This miracle of the draught of fishes was repeated by our LORD later on in the course of His life on earth. On the first occasion, of which we have already spoken, He intended to represent the condition of the

Church as we see it now—the net filled with a miscellaneous crowd of fish, its strands and meshes giving way, and the fishermen in perplexity and peril. In the second miracle, performed as it was by JESUS after His Resurrection, is represented the Church as it shall be when the end comes. The net is again full, but now the fishes are all great ones. There is no giving way of the net, for then there shall be no schisms. "Though they were so many, yet was not the net broken." The boats are in no danger now, for the net is dragged direct to shore, and the fish are landed safely there. Now why did our LORD employ precisely the same miracle to represent this as the one which He had used previously, if not to point us back to that former one which had shown the Church rent with schisms? It was to lead us to look forward to the end—

> "When the heavenly net is laden
> With fishes many and great;
> So glorious in its fulness,
> Yet so inviolate."

No. There shall be no schisms or divisions then. It may indeed please GOD to restore the broken meshes of the Church's net before that time shall come, though we do not see how it may be brought about. But any way our duty is clear. It is carefully to avoid

everything which may tend to widen the breach which now exists; it is to set our faces against the evil speaking, the lying, and the slandering which narrow-minded people amongst us so freely use against those parts of the Church from which, unhappily, we are severed—as though the Church of England was the only branch of the Church Catholic which is free from stain or fault; it is to pray GOD, as thousands of true-hearted men in all parts of Christendom are doing every day, not to regard our sins, but the faith of the Church, and to grant Her that peace and unity which is agreeable to His will, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

SERMON XVIII.

ON FUTURE UNITY.

RIGHT REVEREND AND REVEREND BRETHREN,

* * * *

One subject which demands our attention, from the growing interest with which it is regarded amongst many, is that of Unity. For it is impossible to overlook the various well-directed efforts which are being made to interest many of the communities alien to our own in this deeply important subject. Evidently the Divine Paraclete is illuminating the vision of those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death to work for and towards a future restoration of friendly intercourse and dogmatic oneness,—the like of which (in the humble judgment of him who addresses you) the world shall never have seen. It is not of the strict and mere formal conception of Unity that, on this occasion, I would speak; but of an Unity which underlies much which superficially and

apparently *appears* diverse and distinct, but which nevertheless, rightly and impartially comprehended, contains the elements of concord, and not of division—of truth, and not of error.

The first Sacrament of the new law creates an actual bond, which may mysteriously bind together the most diverse in sentiment and will; and the law which thus operates in the case of an individual, may, with reasonable and not antagonistic qualifications, likewise be found potent in independent communities of the baptized. At least it may be wisdom, Christian wisdom, to act with a continual remembrance of the blessed Apostle's Divine saying, as regards the theological virtues, "the greatest of these is charity." The baptized and those not baptized stand altogether in a different relation to our Divine Lord and His Heavenly Father. The baptized, wheresoever found, are His brethren by grace, born again, adopted and blessed: may they not, then, be gathered together in one fellowship of heavenly benediction in the eyes of men, in the sight of Angels and Saints, for the fulfilment of the beautiful intercession of our Dying Redeemer? What has been may be. The Catholic Church once knew an Unity, both formal and material, potent, grand, perfect, wonder-working;

when the heathen nations were brought home, and the blessed message of Redemption was borne far and wide; and may she not know a similar glorious conjunction again? The delights of grace shall be increased when the world is in its dotage, and the future victories of the Catholic Church shall be a series of novel miracles in the latter ages. The prophecies of Isaiah and others, never in their fulness and completeness as yet fulfilled, shall be known to be the unerring words of the Lord of our spiritual Israel; while the breaches and schisms of past ages, brought about by the ambition, or selfishness, or lusts of princes, shall be healed in the days that are to come. None can say that a nation or a race cannot be dealt with by the wise and temperate spiritual guides of Holy Church; nor can His Words fall away or remain eventually unaccomplished, Who prayed that His Apostles and followers might be visibly One, that the world might admit His Divine mission, and accept His law of charity.

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✠ P.

SERMON XIX.

THE A. P. U. C.

In the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

We speak to you on this occasion of a wise and charitable work which was set on foot in the metropolis of Great Britain some years ago to bring about a corporate Re-union between those separated Churches, which taken together make up what is commonly regarded as the Christendom of the present day. It is a work of love, in which the only work done is the powerful labour of daily prayer and intercession. The orison which is used is taken from the sacred Mass, added to which a Pater-noster is said daily. The founders of this excellent Association—an Association which breathes in its very address the messages of good-will and of peace in one well-blended sentiment,—have displayed great wisdom by wisely resolving to pledge those who joined themselves in the work to the policy of

carefully avoiding needless disputes and argumentative frivolities with regard to doctrinal differences. With them, these are not discussed,—they are not called upon to dwell either on the cause or the fact of division, but on its abundant and increasing evils. They are not solicited to attach themselves to this political section or to the other, to this ecclesiastical school or to that, nor are they expected to accept ecclesiastical opinions as of dogmatic force: but they are asked, and they voluntarily oblige themselves so to do when they join the society, to pray simply, that, when Providence may think well to restore the peace and unity of past generations, unjust prejudices and misrepresentations on their part may be unknown. We are informed under his own hand, by a Right Reverend Brother of the mother country, who is himself a member of the Association, of the many important objects which the Reunionists are enabled to bring to pass, of which evidence is afforded. And it is pointed out to us by others who are accurately informed, that the blessing of the ALMIGHTY appears to rest on their charitable labours.

Now surely we may hope, when we see such excellent intentions so well set forth to the Christian public, that great good may be produced by what we must all admit to be at least

a very remarkable movement in the Established Church of Great Britain. Our separated brethren, if we understand them rightly, appear to desire what they call a "corporate re-union" with the mother Church, with the mother and mistress of all churches, the Holy Catholic and Roman Church. And from the nature of their publications which we have examined, there is little difficulty in understanding in what manner they would wish to see their desires carried into operation. They speak with respectful and affectionate regard of the British saints, of the great and holy Saint Thomas, of the Sacrifice of the Mass, of the Blessed Mother of our LORD; while their publications are filled with commendable defences of the Catholic religion, ably planned and judiciously and learnedly carried out, such as would do no discredit to any Catholic theologian.

What, then, should be the attitude of Catholics with regard to all this? I have little hesitation in publicly declaring that our attitude should be one of deep thankfulness to the Almighty Source of all mercies for a fresh and apparently large outpouring of His Spirit. Those who were called to curse have blessed us again and again. Those who were aliens in fact as well as in spirit have proved themselves —or, at least, are far on the way to prove them-

selves—children of Holy Church and followers of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Deo gratias! the Lord be praised! Added to this, therefore, we should take heed that no unkind words nor any unnecessary fault-finding be made use of to those who are thus labouring for so blessed an object, and are proving themselves to be what both they and we should wish them in deed and in truth to become. We should further remember that for Great Britain the miseries of division and heresy were brought about by those who denied their Lord, and by others who left Him and fled away. The schism of the sixteenth century was, if it may be allowed us to call it so, a corporate act. The people effected it, because they were prepared for it, and willed it so to be. Kings and ministers would have been impotent for evil had priests and prelates of a previous generation been watchful to sound the alarm. Still less could such evils have been brought in, if the practices of religious duties had not given place to a mere formal profession of faith. And deep as was the mischief, and wide-spread, yet may we be thankful that the unbelief of Geneva and the rationalism of Germany have little hold over the British people.

Therefore, in bringing these remarks on this interesting subject to a close, I would counsel a

kindly watchfulness, an earnest sympathy, a charitable bearing, and that many thanksgivings should be made. Prayer is the centre of the Association's life. Without prayer it would be but the bare scaffolding of some well-designed fabric, as yet unbuilt; but, having prayer for its great means, and "the restoration of intercommunion and peace" for its aim, it thus possesses, of its own very nature, a Divine property, of which none shall be able to rob it, and by this means acquires a power of working which, in GOD'S way and time, may enable its promoters,—whom we bless with a Divine benediction,—to reverse by degrees the evils of past separation, and to restore in the end the Visible Re-union they desire.

A.

EPISCOPAL CHARGE.[1]

THE RE-UNION OF THE CHURCHES.

My Reverend Brethren and Brethren of the Laity,

* * * *

Here again, I would remind you of what I have already said, that we must act with the greatest wisdom, as for other causes, so all the more from the circumstances of our isolation.

Isolation! This indeed tells of our condition as a Church, which, however necessary, however appointed for us, is associated with the thought of past corruptions, of some, perhaps, undue reliance on the arm of flesh, and of present weakness; and the consideration of it ought, therefore, to cause us sorrow, and yearnings for Re-union with our separated brethren.

And surely we may hope that the finger of

[1] The extract here given is taken from the Report of a Charge, delivered by the Lord Bishop of Salisbury, in his Cathedral, on August 11, 1864.

God's Providence is, by our present troubles, pointing to this normal condition of the Body of Christ, its Unity, as a means of escape from such troubles; surely we may almost dare to believe that the Saviour's prayer for the Unity of the members of His Body is taking effect through these late assaults on the common inheritance of Christendom, and is preparing the hearts of men for communion with one another in one faith, by placing them side by side in a common defence of some of its articles.

I can truly say that this was my own feeling with regard to the Protestant Dissenters, when I received a token from one at Manchester, of his readiness to bear part of the burden which he thought was mine.

I think also that no one can have read the work of M. Renan without feeling that he, by his infidel encroachments on the inheritance which we share with the Church of France, has by creating the sympathy which attends upon a united resistance to a common danger, contributed something towards removing the barriers which have long parted us from that celebrated communion, and so towards awaking in the Universal Church the blessed Spirit of "Truth, Unity, and Concord." Be it ours never to forget the solemn words of Count de

Maistre: "If Christians should ever draw towards each other—and every consideration might urge them to do so—it seems that the first advance would most naturally be made by the Church of England."

The attempts also which Convocation has sanctioned to enter into friendly relations with the Eastern Church synchronise, we cannot but observe, with our late controversies. And it is to these same assaults, which GOD has, in His Providence, permitted men to make on the faith, that we owe the following strong warning with which Monsieur Guizot has very lately prefaced his Meditations on the Essence of the Christian Religion:—"It is in fact the whole Christian Church, and not this or that Christian Church in particular, which is at the present day the object of attack in its fundamental principles. When the Supernatural, the Inspiration of the Sacred Books, and the Divinity of our LORD JESUS CHRIST are denied, the blow falls upon all Christians, whether Catholics, Protestants, or Greeks; and all Christians, whatever may be their private grounds of disagreement from each other, or their forms of Church government, are robbed of the very bases of their faith. And it is by their faith, that all the Churches of CHRIST maintain their life. There is no description of civil govern-

ment, be it monarchy or republic, be it centralized or shared by many local authorities, which is equal to the work of upholding a Church. There is no authority so strong, no freedom so broad and wide, as to be able to take the place and do the work of faith in a religious society. For the Unity of a Church is the union of souls, and it is a common faith which really bands souls together. When then the foundations of their common faith are assailed, differences which may exist between Christian Churches on particular questions, or points of contrast in their organization and government, come to possess only a secondary interest: since Churches have to protect themselves against a danger common to each and all, when the spring which supplies each one of them with the draught of life is itself threatened with exhaustion."

It will readily occur to an English Churchman that the questions which Monsieur Guizot might deem to be of secondary importance—those, for example, which affect the constitution of the Church of CHRIST, are in reality more intimately linked with our existing controversies than Monsieur Guizot would concede; but I am unwilling to forego for this reason the pleasure of quoting a passage in which the present perils of Christendom are so forcibly de-

scribed by so high an authority. And yet what is of even still greater moment to us, and of less embarrassed liberty of feeling, this common danger has taught many of the members of our own communion, who have ere now looked at one another with suspicion, to satisfy themselves that much was groundless, that some causes of distrust were capable of such explanation as should satisfy the hearts of brethren, and that it was possible to be loyal to one's own convictions and to the truth itself, and yet make allowance for the natural differences of intellectual and moral organization, and the various expressions given to such differences.

I think that I can see many tokens of this re-awakening of the dormant spirit of Unity. Thus I recognize, as one instance of this, the hearty way in which men belonging to different schools of thought in the Church, equally delight to give expression to their value for souls. and their sense of what is due to GOD, by rebuilding or refitting their parish churches. Churchmen may have special fears and dislikes and special hopes and sympathies, and they may place the mark of these differences upon such good works as I am speaking of, but not so as to disturb the conviction that the doers of such works are all brethren, united together by the bonds of one communion.

Again, I would refer to the still greater work in which the members of the diocese, whether lovers of a choral service or not, are united, namely, the restoration of our cathedral, both as another evidence of this growth of good will and brotherly confidence, and also as an earnest of a very general recognition of the truth of the principles which underlie the existence of a cathedral church, and which give it a claim to be the mother church of the diocese. Nor can I, in saying this, forget that it is more difficult for the members of one part of my diocese to realise their connection with our cathedral, than it is for the other, and, I am, therefore, the more thankful that both the clergy and laity of Dorset are each year more and more acting upon the unifying thought that their present relation to the cathedral of Salisbury and its Bishop is only a renewal of time-hallowed ties.

And here I must record my witness that the many able and peaceful discussions in Convocation of matters involving great principles by men who were not supposed to be at one with one another in the faith, though members of the same Church, have tended to bring about this nearer approach to Unity; and in speaking more particularly of my own diocese, I can say the same with regard to the Ruri-Decanal Chapters.

If I am called upon to give my opinion as to their beneficial influence, I can, with a thankful heart, declare my belief that they have helped my clergy, without any unworthy compromise of their principles, to discover that while the points of agreement among them were both manifold and important, those on which they disagreed were comparatively few and of slighter moment.

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W. K. S.

APPENDIX A.

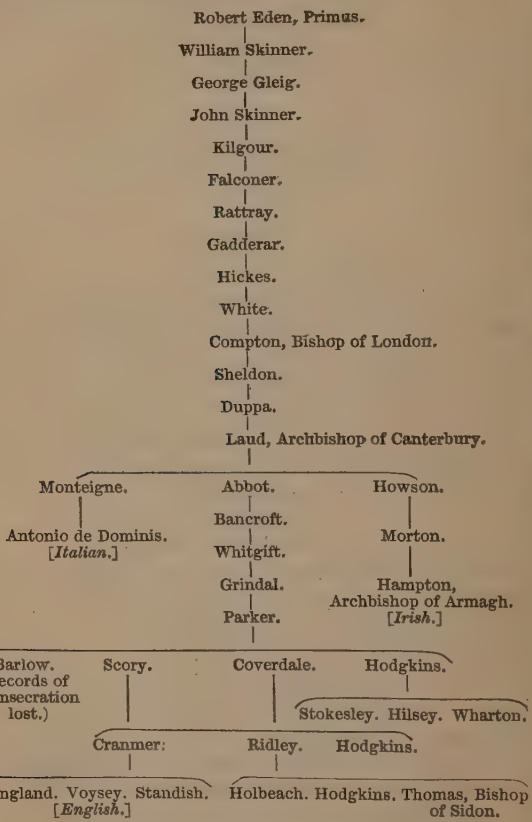
THE writer of the sermon "Shall not the Church of England be heard?" refers at page 169 to the fact drawn forth in the following letter, which appeared in the now defunct *Scottish Ecclesiastical Journal* (Edinburgh: Grant) of December, 1862. The succession of every existing Anglican Bishop,[1] passing through Archbishop Laud, unites, as will be seen, the Italian, English, and Irish lines in one; a fact as remarkable as it is important:—

"SCOTTISH CONSECRATIONS.

"Dear Sir,—There are one or two facts which I ask your permission to put on record in the pages of the *Scottish Ecclesiastical Journal*, which, if not already noticed, may prove of interest to some of your readers. They are these—viz., that the present Bishops of Scotland unite in themselves a threefold apostolical line: first, they can trace their descent from England, through Parker and Cranmer, up to S. Augustine; secondly, through Hampton, Archbishop of Armagh, who in 1616 joined in the consecration of Thomas Morton; and, thirdly, through Archbishop Antonio de Dominis, the Italian who joined in the consecration of Mon-

[1] The "Scottish Episcopal Church" derived its present succession from England.

teigne and two other Anglican Prelates. The following simple table will illustrate these facts :—



"I remain, dear Sir, yours very faithfully,

"FREDERICK GEORGE LEE.

"Fountainhall, Aberdeen, Dec. 12, 1862."

APPENDIX B.

ASSOCIATION FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE UNITY OF CHRISTENDOM.

(Established September 8, 1857, Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.)

An Association has been formed under the above title, to unite in a bond of intercessory prayer members both of the clergy and laity of the Roman Catholic, Greek, and Anglican Communions. It is hoped and believed that many, however widely separated at present in their religious convictions, who deplore the grievous scandal to unbelievers, and the hindrance to the promotion of truth and holiness among Christians, caused by the unhappy divisions existing amongst those who profess to have "One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism," will recognize the consequent duty of joining their intercession to the Redeemer's dying prayer, "that they all may be One, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be One in Us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." To all then, who, while they lament the divisions among Christians, look forward for their healing mainly to a Corporate Re-Union of those three great bodies which claim for themselves the inheritance of the priesthood and the name of Catholic, an appeal is made. They are not asked to compromise any principles which they rightly or wrongly hold dear. They are simply asked to unite for the promotion of a high and holy end, in reliance

on the promise of our Divine LORD, that "whatsoever we shall ask in prayer, believing, we shall receive;" and that "if two or three agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My FATHER Who is in heaven." The daily use of a short form of prayer, together with one "Our FATHER"—for the intention of the Association—is the only obligation incurred by those who join it; to which is added, in the case of priests, the offering, at least once in three months, of the Holy Sacrifice, for the same intention.

FORM OF PRAYER.

O LORD JESUS CHRIST, Who saidst unto Thine Apostles, My peace I leave with you, My Peace I give unto you; regard not my sins, but the faith of Thy Church; and grant Her that Peace and Unity which is agreeable to Thy Will, Who livest and reignest GOD for ever and ever. Amen. Our FATHER, &c.

Note.—In joining the Association, no one is understood as thereby expressing an opinion on any matter which may be deemed a point of controversy, or on any religious question except that the object of the Association is desirable.

Those who are desirous of joining the Association are requested *to write out* the following Declaration printed in italics, append to it *their name and place of residence in full*, and return it to the Secretary of the Association for the Promotion of the Unity of Christendom, The Rev. FREDERICK GEORGE LEE, care of Mr. J. T. HAYES, Lyall Place, Eaton Square, London, S.W.

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[*Signed*].....

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[1] Lay persons will omit the words in brackets.

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